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ABSTRACT

This paper examines educational participation as a process. It centers on educational participation as a behavioral act because outcomes are not independent of the actors who shape them. A knowledge of who participates and why they do so should help in understanding and predicting change in educational institutions. This research effort attempts to analyze the effect of selected antecedent and concurrent variables on participation in participatory educational planning. This particular vehicle for educational participation has two significant features: it is a form of involvement that allows people to participate at the policy level (making policy decisions via long- and medium-range planning proposals) and is an easily accessible form of participation. The first chapter deals with participation in education generally and seeks to provide the context for subsequent examination of participation in planning. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework for this. study. In it are included the research design and operationalization of variables. The two subsequent chapters describe and analyze findings. Four groups of participants (parents, teachers, students, and administrators/nonteaching staff) are given separate attention. Chapter 5 brings together the major findings and discusses some of the implications. A detailed methodological section is provided in the appendix. (Author/IRT)

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WHO PARTICIPATES?

A FIELD STUDY OF PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT

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July, 1976

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Nelly Peñaloza Stromquist, in collaboration with Rudolph Johnson

June, 1975

This paper is the product of nearly two years of study of participation in Project Redesign.

The causal model of participation was developed by Nelly Stromquist, who carried out the analysis of data. The conceptualization of high accessibility/low accessibility forms of participation, the study of differing types of participation within the District, and differing responses by students, parents, and professionals in the planning project grew out of many months of active work with the volunteer planners and many discussions between the Project investigators.

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CONTENTS

Page

PREFACE i

I. PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL ARENA

A. Main Findings about Educational Participation 1
B. Forms of Participation in Education 3
C. The School District as an Organization 10

II. PARTICIPATION IN PARTICIPATORY EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

A. The Research Problem 17
B. The Theoretical Framework 18
  1. The Antecedent Conditions of Participation 18
  2. The Concurrent Conditions of Participation 19
  3. The Linkages between Antecedent and Concurrent Conditions 22
C. Operationalization of Variables 24
  1. The Dependent Variable: Participation 24
  2. The Independent Variables 25

III. ANTECEDENT CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Characteristics of Participants 28
B. Comparison with Participants in Low-Accessibility Forms of Participation 36
C. The Relative Effect of Antecedent Variables on Participants in the Planning Task 42

IV. CONCURRENT CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

A. The Distribution of the Dependent and Concurrent Variables 48
B. The Effect of Antecedent and Concurrent Variables upon Participation in the Planning Task 54
  1. The Case of Parents 55
  2. The Case of Teachers 57
  3. The Case of Administrators/Nonteaching Staff 60
  4. The Case of Students 63
C. The Effect of Situations of Role Congruency and Role Conflict on Participation 65

Page

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A. The Nature of Educational Participation: Action vs. Policy Level 70
B. The Influence of Organizational Affiliation and Levels of Education 72
C. Educational Participation as a Social Interaction Process 74
D. Policy Implications for School Authorities 78

VI. METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX 82

VII. REFERENCES 89

PREFACE

The belief that schools should be responsive to their surrounding community is deeply engrained in the dominant American culture. Participation by laymen in educational activities of a supportive or auxiliary character, as well as in those dealing with policy-making, is considered both necessary and useful to attain desirable educational outcomes.

While many participation studies have sought to describe and analyze the purposes, goals, and achievements of various channels for educational participation, scant attention has been directed to the study of participation as a behavioral act. Educational participation has been studied mostly as a means of developing school policy. The analysis of factors that account for participation has received less emphasis.

Furthermore, the concern with participation has focused on parents and citizens. Participation of students has seldom been examined, perhaps because it has been quite limited. Participation by teachers, administrators, and other nonteaching staff in educational activities and decisions has been seen as part of formal organizational behavior, but not within the framework of voluntary participation.

This paper examines educational participation as a process. It centers on educational participation as a behavioral act. The rationale for this emphasis is that outcomes are not independent of the actors who shape them. A knowledge of who participates and why they do so should help in understanding and predicting change in our educational institutions.

This research effort attempts to analyze the effect of selected antecedent and concurrent variables upon participation in participatory educational planning. This particular vehicle for educational participation has two significant features: it is a form of involvement that allows people to participate at the policy level (making policy decisions via long- and medium-range planning proposals) and, at the same time, is an easily-accessible form of educational participation. In other words, anyone can participate.

The first chapter of this paper serves an introductory purpose. It deals with participation in education generally and seeks to provide the context for the subsequent examination of participation in planning.

Chapter II provides the theoretical framework for this study. In it are included the research design and the operationalization of variables.

The two subsequent chapters describe and analyze findings. Four groups of participants (parents, teachers, students, and administrators/ nonteaching staff) are given separate attention.

Chapter V brings together the major findings and discusses some of the implications.

A detailed methodological section is provided in the Appendix.

CHAPTER I

PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL ARENA

In its broadest sense, educational participation can be defined as the act or series of acts by which individuals maintain contact with the school system or affect the distribution of existing or future educational goods. This definition encompasses what von Moltke (1973) has called educational participation at the "action level" (those activities that support or facilitate the implementation of educational decisions) and participation at the "policy level" (those actions directly related to the formulation of educational policies or decisions).[1] The utilization of this definition is necessary because, while the educational literature shows a bias in considering as participation mainly activities that concern policy-making, participation at the action level is by far the most common dimension of educational participation.

A. Main Findings about Educational Participation

Participation in the educational arena, unlike participation in political activities and in voluntary associations, has been studied carefully only in the last 15 years, and since a decentralized form of educational governance is characteristic of only two nations - Canada and the United States - most of the research findings refer to these settings.

A review of the literature on educational participation reveals that much of the citizen involvement in educational issues occurs at the action level. The Boards of Education constitute in fact a limited form of citizen involvement in educational decision-making.

The character and intensity of educational participation in a given school district depends on several factors. The socioeconomic makeup of the community is an important element. Characteristics such as high levels of education and occupation are associated not only with moderate to high rates of participation in politics and voluntary organizations, but also with active involvement in educational issues. The way in which the school system is perceived - i.e., as responsive to the community or as attempting to dominate it (socializing students into what is seen as an alien culture) - seems to be a crucial psychological variable affecting participation. A congruence of community and school personnel expectations regarding the purposes of schooling facilitates the interaction between these two groups. The structural arrangements for participation provided by the schools also affect participation. School districts which provide channels for participation tend to evince greater rates of participation than school districts which do not provide such channels.

Various studies of educational politics suggest that participation in educational affairs is more open and widespread in the suburbs than in the cities, especially large urban centers (Minar, 1966; Martin, 1962; O'Shea, 1975). This situation is believed to be related to the fact that many large cities have a substantial minority and low-income population, characterized by limited social involvement; some minority members perceive schools as middle-class-value oriented institutions; and school districts in large cities are highly centralized and, therefore, provide limited access to participation.

Nation-wide studies have shown that participation in educational issues attracts only a few of those affected by the educational system, either as clients (parents and students) or as subsidizers (taxpayers). There is evidence showing that most contact with the schools occurs through the participation of parents in matters directly concerning their child (teacher conferences and special programs and events). Further, parental involvement usually centers on providing schools with the necessary resources to "do their job", rather than on determining educational methods and content, or evaluating learning outcomes.

Most data about participation in schools come from extensive surveys. One of the earliest surveys on educational participation is the one carried out by Carter (1960). He found that about half the voters showed neither evidence of participation in school affairs nor interest in such participation, and that the "present basis for voter commitment in school affairs is parenthood". Mann (1975) found that parental and community pressure, when it is present, exists mainly at the elementary level of schooling.

A survey of 103 school districts carried out by Minar (1972) concluded that the governance of education is not very salient to most of the citizenry, except where it reaches directly into the "pocketbook" or where it touches a controversy such as busing or closure of schools to meet budgetary deficits. Another survey of 100 school districts by Zeigler et al. (1973), concurred with Minar's findings, asserting that schools have a "typically apathetic mass public with group expressions of expectations heavily biased in favor of the status quo".

It has been found in regional-level studies (Goldhammer, 1965; Bloomberg and Sunshine, 1963), that citizens who are described by others as influential in educational affairs do not occupy places of the highest prestige or influence in their community. Hunter (1953), however, is of the opinion that while, in large cities, board of education members tend to be second-line power figures, they are nonetheless "elements of the formal power structure of the community". Goldhammer noted that individuals who were intensive participants in education were interested in social and welfare activities and saw educational activities as a means for expressing their concern for their own and other children. Supporting Goldhammer's findings, Sternhall (1970) found that the educational leadership structure tended not to include community leaders and that there was no evidence that educational leaders tended to become involved in areas other than those related to expanded school programs.

It would appear that participation in educational activities attracts a certain type of individual and that these persons tend to specialize in it. For instance, it seems that those actively involved in national or local government tend not to participate in educational activities and that those who participate in education generally have no political connections or ambitions. A 1974 national survey of 1500 school board members reported that few of them had sought office because of a desire for political experience (NSBA).

The study by Bloomberg and Sunshine (1963) found that while participation in education was related to higher socioeconomic levels, the values or preferences of these individuals regarding school objectives and programs varied a good deal. Yet, the same study suggested that direct involvement with school matters promotes favorable fiscal attitudes because school decision-makers regularly hold more favorable attitudes than nondecision-makers or the general public. However, it could be argued that those who participate are persons who hold favorable attitudes toward the school district in the first place. The causal flow is not unambiguous.

B. Forms of Participation in Education

Most studies of educational participation have dealt with participation as a means to desired or actually achievable outcomes. The various existing typologies of educational participation reflect this approach. Among the best known are the classifications by Cunningham and Nystrand (1970), Fantini (1974), and Davies (1974).

Cunningham and Nystrand offer a typology of participation based on the purpose of participation. They distinguish four main types of participation: developing community understanding and support for educational objectives, supplementing school staff in the pursuit of educational objectives, articulating citizens expectations for the schools, and insisting on accountability for educational objectives. Davies categorizes participation on the basis of structural arrangements. He speaks of administrative decentralization, community control experiments, community advisory councils, special advisory committees, exist models and alternative educational models. Fantini's typology parallels that of Cunningham and Nystrand. He classifies citizen participation by the stated or actual purposes of participation. His categorization includes participation for the purposes of "public relations," "instructional support," "crisis resolution," "school governance and institutional reform," "legal resources to educational issues," and "citizens and consumer lobbies for education."

A fourth typology is offered by Cibulka (1974). His conceptualization, based on Arnstein's (1970) "ladder of citizen participation," distinguishes eight types of participation, ranging from "manipulated participation" to higher forms such as "delegated power" and "citizen control."

These typologies have limited usefulness in the analysis of participation as a behavioral act because of their emphasis on participation as a means, and because they fail to distinguish between forms of participation within the school system and outside it.

The study of educational participation as a behavioral act, with the focus placed on accounting for the participant rather than for the product of his participation, has received less attention. The major research effort on understanding the characteristics and motivations of participants in the educational arena is the work of Carter (1960). He offers a typology of the educational participation of U.S. voters on the basis of their direct participation (defined as visiting schools, attending meetings, and talking to school officials and teachers) and their indirect participation (defined as talking and being informed about the schools). Thus, Carter offers a fourfold classification: the active (direct) and communicative (indirect) voter, the uncommunicative and inactive, the active and uncommunicative, and the inactive and communicative citizen. His typology, though centering on the participant, uses rather tangential indicators of educational participation and is excessively broad.

Within the framework of participation as a behavioral act, still another classification can be made. Since educational participation is voluntary, we will distinguish between forms of participation that are high or low in degree of accessibility, i.e., the ease or difficulty of becoming a participant. In addition, a distinction can be made between those forms of participation that result in auxiliary activities and those which deal with policy issues. Since educational participation is voluntary, these two levels of participation ("action" vs. "policy") can be said to possess different appeals, given the differential type of reward they entail. The matrix below illustrates this new conceptualization. The forms of participation included in each cell are those likely to be found in most school districts.

Table 1

Forms of Educational Involvement by Level of Participation and Degree of Accessibility

	High Accessibility	Low Accessibility
Action-level Participation	PTA members School volunteers Classroom volunteers	PTA leadership
Policy-level participation	School board or school tax elections Interest groups Participatory planning	Advisory committees Task forces Study groups Board of Education

We will examine the forms of participation included in the matrix above.

Participation in the Board of Education

This form of participation is the only one that formally grants powers for involvement at the policy level. By law, Board members are considered state officers with school district jurisdiction. Most educational codes grant board members full authority and responsibility for their school district.

Committed and active board members can supposedly become initiators of school policy; in practice, this is rarely the case. Numerous studies of the role of boards of education underscore the limited role played by boards (Bendiner, 1969; Bidwell, 1965; Gittell, 1970; Wirt and Kirst, 1972; Zeigler, 1973). Not only do boards have a limited role in the initiation of policies, but it has also been shown that as high as 90 percent of all board decisions are unanimous or uncritical support for recommendations of professional staff (Herriott and Hodgkins, 1969).

The limited performance of boards of education as decision-makers is not surprising. Beyond the limitations to which board members are subject because of increased state and federal legislation on educational issues, they face two serious constraints at the local level. First, since they are usually full-time professionals in some non-educational occupation, their involvement in educational affairs is necessarily part-time. Secondly, they depend heavily on the superintendent and his staff for information, as well as interpretation of educational issues. There is evidence that board members are socialized by administrators to accept the superiority of the "professional viewpoint" (Charters, 1963; Kerr, 1964; Goldhammer, 1965).

Although in theory most citizens can run for election to the Board of Education, the membership of most boards has been predominantly male, professional, and white. The early study by Counts (1927) revealed that three-fourths of board members in cities were business and professional men. [2] During the last 20 years, the percentage of women on school boards has remained quite low. Female membership has ranged from 10 to 24 percent. At present, women comprise 12 percent of all school board members (NSBA, 1974). Expressed differently, over half of U. S. boards of education do not have women members. Women are more likely to serve on school boards when members are elected rather than appointed. Women are usually appointed to replace another boardwoman than to fill the vacancy left by a male board member (Fishel and Pottker, 1974). Recent attempts at decentralization of large urban school districts have resulted in an increase of women and minority members, as has been the case in New York City and Detroit. However, women board members, as well as minority board members, continue to be only a fraction of total board memberships.

Membership in school boards is assumed to demand a knowledge of parliamentary skills, public speaking ability, and a relatively high degree of competence in understanding and judging educational and public issues. As a result, it is not surprising that boards tend to be heavily loaded with professionals rather than with white- and blue-collar workers. And many of these prerequisites may not be necessary for the task but merely perceived as necessary. Issues dealt with by boards have been found to be predominantly non-policy issues, particularly routine housekeeping and administrative matters (Goldhammer, 1964; Kerr, 1964).

Despite the fact that many board of education members run unopposed, membership is difficult to attain. It is an elected office, so candidates must have money, time, and community connections to be successful. Few individuals ever become members without a well-known and extensive record of educational involvement.

Participation in Task Forces, Study Committees, and ad-hoc Committees

This form of participation usually involves dealing with policy issues, but entails only an advisory function. Task forces and similar committees are usually appointed by the school board and the superintendent. This procedure generally results in the selection of persons who enjoy prestige and recognition within the school/community setting. It also results in the recruitment of those whose educational views are known to be moderate (neither too conservative nor too liberal). Participation in task forces and appointed committees, therefore, is not open but is restricted to the more "enlightened" or better-known citizens. These groups are commonly called "blue ribbon committees".

There is not much data about this form of participation. It does appear that there is a tendency to recruit parents of elementary school children.

Participation in task forces requires some degree of expertise, which means that the recruitment effort is focused on parents and citizens with higher levels of education. As a result, participation in task forces and similar groups is a low-accessibility form of participation. High levels of education are often utilized as a criterion for recruitment and the sanction of school authorities determines to a great degree who is considered "acceptable" for membership.

Participation in Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) or in School-Based Parent Groups[2]

This type of participation is characterized by its emphasis on the action level of participation. The main functions of this form of participation have been to acquaint parents with school issues and conditions and to render supportive or auxiliary services for the school.

Until 1973, the PTA's official policy was "not interfering with the administration of the schools and not seeking to control their policies." This rule was modified more recently to state that the PTA "shall work to participate in the decision-making process establishing school policy, recognizing that the legal responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by the people to boards of education." [4]

The PTA is a misnomer in the sense that its active membership is predominantly composed of parents. Although men amount to more than one-third of its total membership (estimated to be over 12 million, thus making the PTA the largest voluntary organization in the U.S.), active involvement and leadership is still almost totally in the hands of mothers.

Participation in the PTA rank and file is high in accessibility, since membership is open to all parents and teachers. To become a PTA leader is more difficult, since successful candidates are usually mothers who are known to have a "proven" interest in schools - which means that PTA leadership is generally attained after a relatively long "apprenticeship" of volunteering in the schools.

Many analysts maintain that the PTA not only has failed to play an active role in policy formulation, but that it has prevented the emergence of other school-related groups with explicit policy objectives. Most observers agree that the PTA has functioned as a "supporting cadre" of the administrators, working toward goals and objectives set by school authorities (Graham, 1963; Cunningham and Nystrand, 1963; Bloomberg and Sunshine, 1963; Falkson and Grainer, 1972; Fantini, et al., 1970; Wiles, 1974; and Mann, 1974). This view, however, is not unanimous. Observers of the PTA in urban settings maintain that the PTA is quite influential in many decisions within the school district (see, for instance, Gross, 1958; Campbell, et al., 1965; O'Shea, 1975).

PTA participation places different demands on its rank and file than on its leadership. While some PTA leaders apparently devote in excess of 200 hours per year to their work, it is possible for the rest of the membership to contribute as little time as they wish. This flexibility is important; it allows mothers to maintain the degree of closeness with the schools that satisfies them.

The fact that PTA functions deal with a great number of auxiliary activities may be one reason why the PTA has attracted so many members. Auxiliary activities make less demands on ability and expertise than participation involving policy-level activities. Mothers who perceive themselves as having limited verbal or social skills, or little knowledge about educational matters, can still feel that they are able to and should participate in supportive activities.

Participation in PTA activities is higher among elementary than high school parents. A recent survey of a medium-sized school district in California revealed that 76 percent of elementary school parents and 64 percent of high school parents were PTA members (IDEA, 1975).[5] If in fact there is a tendency for greater participation among elementary school mothers, a possible reason might be that mothers are likely to participate more when their children are young because of a belief that young children need more personal attention than adolescents. Also, the elementary school setting (one teacher in one classroom) and its curriculum (not as specialized or advanced as in the high school) present mothers with a more comfortable environment.

Participation in Interest Groups

This form of participation usually relates to policy formation. It is generally concerned with a single decision-making or policy issue. Participation in interest groups is an instance of coalition politics within the school system. Since participation in an interest group is triggered by an issue or an unresolved problem, members can be combinations of parents, students, teachers, and other taxpayers, joined together by a common concern.

Participation by interest groups touches the decision-making process in neither the legal nor the advisory sense, but rather in the "pressure" sense. Unlike several other forms of educational participation which are supportive or advisory, participation in interest groups follows an adversary mode.

Interest groups resemble task forces in that their effort is limited to one major topic or problem; likewise, their organized life is usually brief. However, unlike participation in task forces, interest groups enable clients of the schools other than notables to have a role in decisions that are made in the school system.

Participation in School Board Elections or School Bond Elections

This type of participation has received little attention in the literature of educational participation, despite the fact that electoral involvement (i.e., voting) enjoys considerable salience in analyses of political participation.

While voting is a highly-accessible form of participation and one that deals with policy formation indirectly, few persons vote. Participation in the election of school boards - 75 percent of which are elected - appeals to a small number of voters, compared to national, state, and other local government elections. It involves from a low of 5 to a high of about 40 percent of the electorate, with a modal participation rate of about 25 percent.*

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* This figure is advanced with a note of caution, because it is based on the authors' average from findings in individual communities only.

Although the school-related vote has not been broken down by categories other than sex, it would seem a reasonable assumption that most voters are parents or concerned property-owners. Participation in school-related elections is higher in the suburbs than in large cities. This has generally been attributed to greater levels of citizen involvement in, and satisfaction with, educational matters in the suburban areas. Yet, a study by Minar (1966) of 48 suburban communities in Illinois found a high and positive relationship between participation in school elections and dissent in the community.[6]

Participation in Community Control Boards and Decentralized Community Advisory Councils

These forms of participation are concerned mostly with policy formation. While it could be argued that these two forms of participation differ in their policy-making capabilities, we place them in the same category because community advisory councils amount to a much milder form of community control board which has, consequently become more acceptable and widespread than the latter.[7]

These community or parent advisory councils have achieved some degree of popularity, in part due to recent educational legislation, such as Title I of ESEA or SB 1302 for the Early Education Program in California, which require "parental input" in school decisions. In other cases, these councils have been formed at the initiative of local school administrators, mostly as a result of a current societal trend calling for more accountability of public institutions, including schools.

As their name indicates, the functions of these advisory committees are those of offering recommendations, mostly in the area of budget, new programs, and curriculum.

The potential importance of these groups in the area of participation at the policy level resides in the fact that these groups are meant to be ongoing bodies and are expected to become a channel for less elitist representation in the school system. There are no comprehensive records of how many parents have joined these advisory councils. In the state of Florida, where these committees are mandated by state law, it is estimated that there is one committee member for every 800 residents.[8] A survey of parents in a California school district found that 22 percent of parents with children in elementary schools and 4 percent of those with children in junior high schools had participated in advisory committees (IDEA, 1975).[9]

There is some evidence that creating community advisory councils does not necessarily mean that new (i.e., former non-participants) will join. Mann's (1974) study of parental councils in New York City found that these councils were "generally dominated by the same sort of (relatively) elite community activists who would have been actively engaged in the schools anyway." Representative participation, in the sense of having individuals reflecting in adequate proportions the socioeconomic or ethnic composition of the community, has been found to be problematic in various advisory councils: poor and working people tend to be under-represented (Falkson and Grainer, 1973; Cunningham, 1973; Mann, 1974).[10]

It also appears that even in cases where advisory councils were mandated as a form of providing easier communication between citizens and school officials, participation in them offers low accessibility. Appointment, a form of sanctioned or sponsored participation, is by far the most common way by which individuals become members. In the state of Florida, where advisory committee system is supposed to be "representative", 85 percent of its members are appointed.[11]

C. The School District as an Organization

Although citizen participation in school activities and issues is part of the American credo and strongly upheld in principle, citizen input is patently not crucial to the survival or maintenance of the school district's day-to-day operations. We have seen from the earlier review of educational participation that most citizen participation occurs at the action level and that the limited portion that touches the policy dimension is generally advisory. An examination of the school district as a formal organization might help to clarify why this happens.

Students of organizations have recognized that schools and school districts can be described as organizations with a stable hierarchy, well-differentiated roles, behavioral regularities, and an overt function: the moral and technical socialization of the young (Bidwell, 1965; Coleman, 1966; Dreeben, 1968; Pomfret, 1972). Paradoxically, and in contrast to other organizations, especially those in industry, schools have been found to behave as "loosely-coupled" organizations, characterized by an unclear technology, few controls (evaluation and supervision) over internal behavior, and many "uninspected activities and subunits" (Meyer, 1975).

There is agreement among observers that schools have been relatively untouched by strong external (i.e., community) pressures. Divergent explanations for this fact are proposed.

Blau and Scott (1965) maintain that "service" or "maintenance" institutions are especially vulnerable to their environment. As such, schools must develop a calculated relationship with their community. On the one hand, schools must be responsive to their clientele (essentially the parents) and, on the other hand, administrators must prevent client demands from defining client welfare, since this would reduce the former's authority and legitimacy.

In facing this dilemma of maintaining parent interest and commitment to support the school's hold over students, while maintaining sufficient layman-administration distance to provide what Bidwell terms "organizational latitude", school administrators have been found to resort to mechanisms, such as strengthening bureaucratic structures, forming an ideology of expertise, placing school boards into fiduciary roles, and channeling parental involvement into acceptable forms, the typical example being the PTA (Graham, 1963; Bidwell, 1965; Falkson et al., 1972; Saxe, 1973). Mann (1973) noted that while endorsing the notion of lay participation, administrators tend to restrict citizen involvement to the budget problems and student disciplinary matters, and see curriculum and teacher personnel issues as reserved to professional judgment.

The findings just described suggest that schools function as closed systems of decision-making and that this is to a great extent due to manipulations of administrators who have successfully argued that "business efficiencies" and "rational decisions" call for professional expertise.

While not necessarily denying that schools function as closed systems, Meyer (1975) offers an opposing interpretation for the school's autonomy vis-a-vis its environment. In his view, educational institutions do not have to control their environment. On the contrary, it is their environment - or the society at large - which gives schools their meaning and legitimacy. Schooling has been socially defined and, according to this definition, many of its functions are seen as falling within the domain of "educators". Meyer contends that educational institutions merely try to "maintain" the social definition for schooling and that they do so by coordination and control of "externally-defined categories", such as "teachers", "pupils", and "topics".

Meyer's argument is appealing. But it could be maintained that one of the "social definitions" of schooling stipulates that laymen should actively participate in educational governance. How is it that Boards of Education and indirectly all lay persons come to have only a limited role in policy-making, and administrators so effectively influence policy decisions made in school districts?

From the organizational viewpoint, some reasons are clear. Unlike Board members, who are involved only on a part-time basis with the school system and mostly as outside observers, administrators spend a substantial amount of their time in it. Because of their position of authority, they gain information about and control over the general process of the school district. Further, the day-to-day operations of the school system inevitably place administrators in a decision-making capacity, which is later transferred to broader levels. Findings from behavior of government bureaucracies have given evidence that policy formation and policy administration are not dichotomous but inseparable aspects of the policy-making process. The placement of the superintendent and his staff in administrative positions has led them into a decision-making capacity.

An additional explanation of the school's success in maintaining its "organizational latitude" can be formulated through Hirschman's notion (1970) of "exit" and "voice" in an organization. He asserts that "exit" and "voice" are instruments that clients use to influence organizations. Administrators find out about their failures when clients take the "exit" option and leave the organization, or when clients "voice" their dissatisfaction directly to the management or to some authority who listens to them.

As Hawley notes (1971), in education - unlike industry or other social organizations - both "exit" and "voice" are limited. Public schools mainly serve a captive clientele: those who are able to leave are wealthy enough to afford private schooling. Others who leave are the dropouts, who not only take the "exit" route from a given school, but from the educational system altogether.

In the opinion of Hawley and other observers of urban school systems, the option of "voice" - or the political route - has not been utilized to any large degree. Except for a few critical cases (the issue of community-controlled schools in New York City, busing, controversial textbooks), parent mobilization to propose or to react to school decisions has been limited. Hawley sees a number of reasons for this: the majority of people may not be dissatisfied with the education their children are receiving; the "myth of professionalism" has restricted the "legitimate" areas of lay involvement; and the formal structures of citizen involvement have been effectively depoliticized.

Yet, studies of suburban schools, as opposed to those of urban and large-city schools, contend that "voice" does exist, even though it is not political. Citing a study based on 200 suburban districts by Martin (1970) and his own, based on several suburban districts in Chicago, O'Shea (1975) argues that an effective exchange relationship operates between school and community in the suburbs. Partly because of the residents' higher levels of education and involvement in school activities, and partly because of the harmony of views between administrators and parents as to the function of schooling, parental input is an important force in shaping educational decisions. O'Shea maintains that the major means parents use in these settings are not political (i.e., presenting demands to the Board of Education), but organizational (i.e., knowing and having constant contact with school administrators, especially principals, and letting them know of their preferences for specific programs or curricula). Thus, unlike many observers who have termed the PTA as very, if not completely, ineffectual at the policy-level participation, O'Shea argues that the PTA serves a crucial role in the process of "boundary spanning", a process by which "an organization receives inputs of information and resources from environmental elements and, conversely, exerts some measure of control over these elements in order to achieve predictability regarding input and also to protect, or 'buffer' the technical or operational level of the organizations from externally-generated disruptions" (pp. 7-8).

If relations between schools and communities vary depending on whether we are dealing with large-city or suburban districts, citizen participation is probably different in these two settings, and findings from one may not be generalizable to the other.

While inter-organizational arrangements between schools and community groups seem to differ, findings suggest that the intra-organizational features of schools are uniform. Lortie (1969) and Becker (1953) advance explanations that account for the internal stability of schools. Their work is discussed herein because they contribute to our understanding of teacher participation in school decisions.

Lortie's main premise is that, in any given occupation, individuals direct their reward-seeking energies at those points likely to produce greater rewards. He sees three types of occupational reward: extrinsic (prestige, money, power), ancillary (part of the job: security, two-month vacations), and intrinsic (the pleasure of the job itself). Lortie contends that in the case of teachers, extrinsic and ancillary rewards are rather fixed; therefore, they concentrate on intrinsic rewards, i.e., on "teaching the students". As a consequence, teachers seek to maximize working in their classroom and leave schoolwide concerns to principals. The latter oblige because they are given freedom to exert educational leadership and, in exchange, principals agree to protect teachers from parental pressures so that teachers may further devote their energies to students.

Becker's analysis emphasizes the role of expectations. In his opinion, the basic expectations of teachers in the system are to be given autonomy in the classroom and to be protected by administrators from parental interference. The basic expectation of principals is that teachers should take care of their classrooms with a minimum of requests for help or support; principals see their own role as dealing with school-wide matters, setting policy, and handling relations with the community.

If the exchange relationship between principals and teachers posited by Lortie and Becker holds true for many school settings, what are its consequences for teacher participation in school issues and activities? Lortie found that few teachers participate in school committees or in general school, educational, or professional affairs. A more recent study (Mann, 1975) of staff development projects in several schools resulted in a similar observation: "Schools are in many ways like an army and in both places anyone who volunteers for anything is regarded as peculiar, if not a little touched" (p. 16).

Though the evidence about voluntary teacher participation in school-wide or district-wide issues is far from conclusive, it suggests that few teachers feel the need to become involved beyond their classroom and that most of them accept the division of labor that places principals and other administrators in policy-making responsibilities.

We have examined the school as organization and seen how its functioning might affect voluntary parental and teacher participation. What can be said about its consequences for student participation? Very little has been written on this, mainly because, until a few years ago, student participation had not been considered an issue.

Bidwell (1965) maintains that the role structure of the school system contains a fundamental dichotomy between staff and student roles. Unlike staff members, who enter the educational system voluntarily, students have no choice: they are recruited. Further, students are defined as passive clients; their role is not to question what they are taught, but to learn well. Bidwell, and also Waller (1932) argue that students develop their own subculture. Bidwell says: "The student subculture assimilates the formal demands and requirements of the student role, elaborates conventionalized procedures for adapting to and deflecting these demands and requirements, and more or less effectively insulates students from the alien tasks of studentship." If students essentially develop a defense mechanism to cope with schooling, as Bidwell suggests, student participation in school issues will be limited to forms of participation which are formally included in the student role; other forms of participation will be avoided.

Summary

Participation in education has attracted a relatively small percentage of individuals, both outside and within the school organization. The largest amount of educational participation has taken place at the action level, via the auxiliary and supportive activities of numerous citizens, mostly mothers.

For a variety of reasons, parents, teachers, and students had played a secondary role in school decisions; often their participation has been limited to presenting advice. Lay participation at the policy level - except for participation in school board elections - has essentially taken place through forms of participation characterized by low accessibility.

NOTES

1. The distinction between the "action" and "policy" levels of participation is borrowed from Konrad von Moltke's article, "The Consequences of Participation" (mimeo, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, October 1973). He terms "action" level those activities related to actual "teaching and learning, their preparation and execution", and "policy" level those activities undertaken by law-making bodies, trustees, administrative authorities, and teachers' conferences which result in "formally-recognized influences at the action level". We are expanding his concept of "action" level to include activities by participants who are not teachers and students which seek to facilitate the teaching or learning process. We are also expanding his "policy" level definition to include participation by citizens and students in the formulation of educational decisions.

2. Counts also found that in rural districts, 95 percent of Board members were engaged in agriculture, but this result is somewhat meaningless for he failed to differentiate between large and small farm owners.

3. Participation in school-based parent groups exists in various school districts in which parents do not wish to join the nationwide PTA. These groups perform a function quite similar to the PTA, except that they usually do not have a centralized leadership at the school-district level. This feature is seen as a liability by administrators, who find it more advantageous to have the parents under a central leadership, since this facilitates dealing with parents. Apparently, one of the major reasons parents do not wish to join the PTA is that 60 percent of their dues is assigned to the national organization.

4. Guidebook of California State PTA, 1973-1974. Los Angeles, California: State PTA, March 1973, p. 31.

5. *Culver City Views Its Schools. A Study of School-Community Relations.* Prepared by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc. Los Angeles, California, February 1975.

6. Minar measured dissent in terms of a high proportion of votes cast for losers in board elections and high proportions of "no" votes in referenda.

7. Citizen advisory committees have existed since the early 1950's and lived in relative obscurity until the mid-1960's. Their upsurge can be attributed in part to a white backlash response to the predominantly black community-controlled school movement and in part to a rising citizen concern with the growing power of teacher organizations in dealing with boards about salary and instructional issues. Also important seems to be the "serious decline in the public's confidence in many institutions, including education". This was the major reason stated in Florida's decision mandating the formation of advisory committees in school districts. (See "A Report on School Advisory Committees in Florida." Florida Senate Education Committee, State of Florida, December 1, 1974.)

8. Ibid.

9. Culver City Views its Schools, *op. cit.*

10. Changes in the patterns of participation of low-income groups or minority citizens can apparently be achieved when these individuals are offered baby-sitting services or are paid in money for attending meetings in these advisory committees or councils. This is reported in the findings of James V. Terry and Robert D. Hess, *The Urban/Rural School Development Program: An Examination of a Federal Model for Achieving Parity between Schools and Communities.* Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, Stanford University, January 1975.

11. Florida Senate Education Committee, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER II

PARTICIPATION IN PARTICIPATORY EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

We have seen that educational participation occurs mostly through channels that rely heavily on appointment as a method of selection. What if school systems offer a means of policy-level participation which is genuinely open to everyone?

One such form of educational participation is being tried in several school districts in the United States. It is called participatory educational planning. It attempts to draw parents, teachers, students, and nonteaching staff into a process of stable and orderly decision-making. It is oriented toward intermediate and long-range policy issues. Despite the long-range framework, participatory educational planning has potential for significant influence on policy, since participants are expected to produce proposals for eventual implementation in the school system.

We will examine a case of participatory educational planning that took place in the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) in Palo Alto, California. [1] The participatory planning activity, as carried out in this school district, consisted of volunteers working in small planning teams ranging from 5 to 15 members, who met weekly or bi-weekly. The PAUSD serves a middle- and upper-middle-class suburban community and enjoys a national reputation as a "lighthouse" district. Given the high socioeconomic level of its residents, the PAUSD case offers an interesting opportunity to go beyond socioeconomic characteristics in the understanding of participation.

A. The Research Problem

The research efforts reported in this section center on understanding educational participation as a behavioral act. We have two objectives: to understand the forces that lead individuals to participate in a policy-level activity like this; and to assess the effect of organizational factors on the intensity and quality of participation by individuals.

To accomplish these objectives, we conceptualize participation as the result of both antecedent and concurrent variables. We define as antecedent variables those personal characteristics which precede and lead to involvement in educational activities. Under this set, we will consider variables over which the school district has little control. Antecedent variables include the participants' sociodemographic characteristics, patterns of voluntary organizational affiliation, and attitudes toward education and educational authorities. Concurrent variables will be defined as those which emerge during involvement of the individual in educational activities. The selection of these variables is based on a theoretical as well as a practical rationale. Several of the concurrent conditions can be created by the school district and are, therefore, subject to purposeful change.

This study will seek to answer the following questions:

(1) To what degree are certain antecedent variables associated with participation in a policy-level, high-accessibility form of participation?

(2) As the individual becomes a stable participant, what are the relative effects of specific concurrent variables upon the intensity and quality of participation?

(3) What linkages operate between antecedent and concurrent variables?

B. The Theoretical Framework

1. The Antecedent Conditions of Participation

Antecedent variables affecting participation are numerous. Here we will limit ourselves to examining a set of four antecedent variables: (a) Factors related to the individual's socialization experience. Among these, sex, years of education, and the family's history of voluntary participation are expected to be important. Within the context of U. S. society, women are expected to be closer to their children than men. They are expected to monitor them at home as well as at school. Women are socialized to be more interested in education than their husbands. The number of years of education of the parent is also assumed to play a role because it may supply the individual with the proper social, intellectual, and manual skills and a disposition to see education as a useful mechanism for social and economic mobility. Lastly, individuals who come from families where either one or both parents was engaged in voluntary participation might have acquired the tendency to develop social networks and keep an interest in their community.

(b) Idiosyncratic factors such as the individual's sense of internal control (i.e., whether he feels his actions make a difference in the way an event turns out) and willingness to give time to social and civic activities.

(c) Associational experience factors such as the number of civic and social organizations to which the individual belongs and the number of years as member of a formal educational group. These factors are treated as a set because some of the evidence on voluntary participation suggests that for some people participation seems to be a social habit.

(d) Educational attitudinal factors such as the individual's perceived efficacy vis-à-vis school administrators, his belief about the role of educational authorities in school governance, the degree of importance he attaches to parents in the decision-making process of the school and his level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the educational system.

2. The Concurrent Conditions of Participation

Two distinct but closely related perspectives are employed in the analysis of concurrent variables. One has its roots in sociopsychological theory, while the other uses concepts from organizational theory.

The sociopsychological perspective leads us first of all to consider participation in educational participatory planning as affected by the change in role of individuals who, prior to getting involved in participatory planning, did not play an active part in educational policy formation.

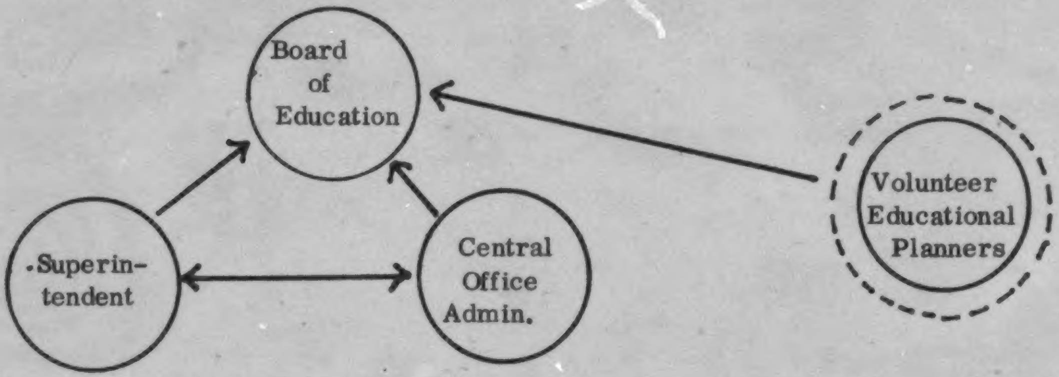
Organizational roles are well established in the school. To ask people to step out of them or to assume new roles which differ markedly from accustomed roles may be very difficult for some individuals. In participatory educational planning, each participant is asked to participate at the policy level, by helping to formulate planning proposals. Given that participatory educational planning operates within the formal organization, i.e., the school district, the concept of role becomes very important and useful. It is a well-established fact that an individual's behavior is shaped by the expectations members of other groups have of him or his relations with them. Roles in organizations have an added significance because in organizations, roles become institutionalized: individuals are penalized if their behavior deviates, beyond a margin of tolerance, from that expected of them.

The concept of role, as used in this study, refers simply to the expected behavior associated with a particular position. In the context of participatory educational planning, the task specifications, as described in Project leaflets, memos and informal talks, become the set of such role expectations. Our definition of role, then, refers to "role prescriptions" in contrast to "role elaborations". The latter are defined by Kahn (1974) as the "complex combination of responses to the expectations of relevant others and spontaneous activities which are neither prescribed nor proscribed by others". March and Simon (1958) add that, "roles in organizations, as contrasted with many other roles that individuals fill, tend to be highly elaborated, relatively stable, and defined to a considerable degree in explicit and even written terms". Wilson (1966) maintains that in a typical voluntary association, roles and tasks are "less specialized, less clearly defined", than is typically the case in organizations providing gainful employment. However, the form of participation under study is heavily task-oriented. The notion of role should therefore be useful here as in other organizations.

Participatory educational planning seeks to involve participants in the policy making process on a continuous rather than ad-hoc basis. Its effects are, then, tantamount to bringing new actors into the educational policy process. Whereas the traditional top level decision makers have been the Board, the superintendent, and the Central Office administrators, participatory planning creates an additional set of actors, the volunteer educational planners. The new configuration assumed herein is as follows:

Figure 1

Main Decision Makers at the School District Level



This diagram also illustrates the fact that teachers and nonteaching staff members also take on a new role in participatory educational planning since they can also become voluntary planners. Ordinarily, members of the staff have limited access to the Board of Education, except as spokespersons for employee organizations. The setting created under participatory educational planning provides an altogether new channel by which teachers and other staff can approach the Board and administration to gather information and to present proposals for action. The normal structure of district offices and committees is then to a certain extent bypassed.[2]

Since involvement in the educational planning task is assumed to result in the performance of a new role, an understanding of the individual's level of participation in such a task should include examination of the acceptance of the new role by the actors; i.e., the degree to which the participants accept the stated objectives and guidelines of the educational activity in which they are involved. It is hypothesized that a positive and direct relationship exists between the individual's degree of role acceptance and the participation level he manifests.

Also derived from sociopsychological theory is the notion of the participants' perceived feeelings of responsiveness on the part of significant others.

The individual's images of the organization, provided they are favorable, have been found to furnish a rationale for action (Sills, 1960). We are assuming that within the context of participatory educational planning, "significant others" are those who have the power to accept or reject proposals presented by the participants. The "significant others" employed herein are "putative" (Rosenberg, 1973) in the sense that - on the basis of organizational behavior - we are determining a priori their importance to the participants in the planning task. In previous studies of decision-making roles (particularly Gross et al, 1958), the main positions recognized at the top of the formal hierarchy have been the Board, and the superintendent. We are adding a third group of actors to this formal hierarchy, the Central Office administrators. Various findings about the decision making process in school districts reveal that as school systems have grown in complexity, assistant and associate superintendents have emerged as very influential actors in the decision making process (notably Gittell, 1967; and McGivney and Haught, 1972).

Within the context of participatory educational planning, "significant others" for the participants will be considered to be the Board, the superintendent and Central Office administrators. In assessing whether an actor's perception of "significant others" affects his participation in the planning task or not, we will also be assessing whether "putative" others are indeed "real" others, an identity which has frequently been assumed to be true (Woelfel and Haller, 1971; Rosenberg, 1973). It is hypothesized that the individual's feelings of perceived responsiveness of significant others will have a positive and direct effect on his level of participation.

Another variable worth exploring refers to role conflict or role congruency. According to role theory, role behavior is usually consistent with the expectations role incumbents (in our case, the volunteer educational planners) hold about their task. But role theory further maintains that even if an individual develops the proper task expectations, his role behavior may be affected by the decision of counter-role incumbents to reciprocate. (Guskin and Guskin, 1970; Oura, 1972). Within the context of participatory planning, the behavior of the volunteer planning might be affected by the decision of "significant" others to be receptive to the proposals of the new actors.

Role theory maintains that if a role incumbent perceives that his expectations coincide with those held by counter-role incumbents toward his role, situation of "role congruency" emerges (Gross et al, 1958; Guskin and Guskin, 1970). It also maintains that if a role incumbent perceives that significant others hold different expectations about his role, this individual will experience "role conflict." This latter condition has been found to inhibit the actor's behavior. The perceived reciprocation of "significant others", therefore, is assumed to act as an important stimulus in encouraging participation. This notion of reciprocation is also strong in exchange theory, which maintains that viable organizations must provide incentive to individuals in exchange for contributions of individual activity (Abbott, 1965).

In the literature, the study of "role conflict" has generally assumed two forms. It has been seen as either "inter-role conflict", i.e., the simultaneous occupancy of two or more positions having incompatible role expectations; or "intra-role conflict", i.e., the contradictory expectations held by two or more groups of "significant" others regarding the same role (Sarbin and Vernon, 1968). We will use the second form in a slightly modified manner: we will rely on the participants' answers to assess the expectations he perceives on the part of significant others. In other words, the significant others' expectations will not be directly measured. We are following a phenomenological approach, by which perceptions individuals hold about others' expectations are considered as real as the actual expectations held by those others. It is hypothesized that the individual's level of participation under a situation of role congruency will be significantly higher than under a situation of role conflict.

Within the organizational perspective, we will examine the effects on participation that derive from working in a heterogeneous group, a group in which individuals having various organizational roles participate: parents, teachers, students, mid-rank administrators, and nonteaching staff. Implied in the advocacy of participatory planning is the assumption that individuals with different positions in the school system will not only be able to work as peers, with a minimum of tension and of conflict, but also that they will become more committed participants because the heterogeneity of the group will produce a socialization process conducive to an increased appreciation of other people's views and needs. It is hypothesized, in consequence, that the degree of group heterogeneity in a planning team will affect the individual member's level of participation, so that the greater the heterogeneity of the group in which he functions, the higher his level of participation.

3. The Linkages between Antecedent and Concurrent Conditions

To examine the relationship between antecedent and concurrent variables, we are positing a fully-recursive causal structure; it is presented on Figure 2. In this causal structure, the individual's level of previous educational participation is utilized as the sole antecedent variable. Previous educational participation is hypothesized to operate principally in affecting levels of role acceptance and feelings of perceived responsiveness of significant others. It is expected to have little direct effect on levels of participation in the planning task.

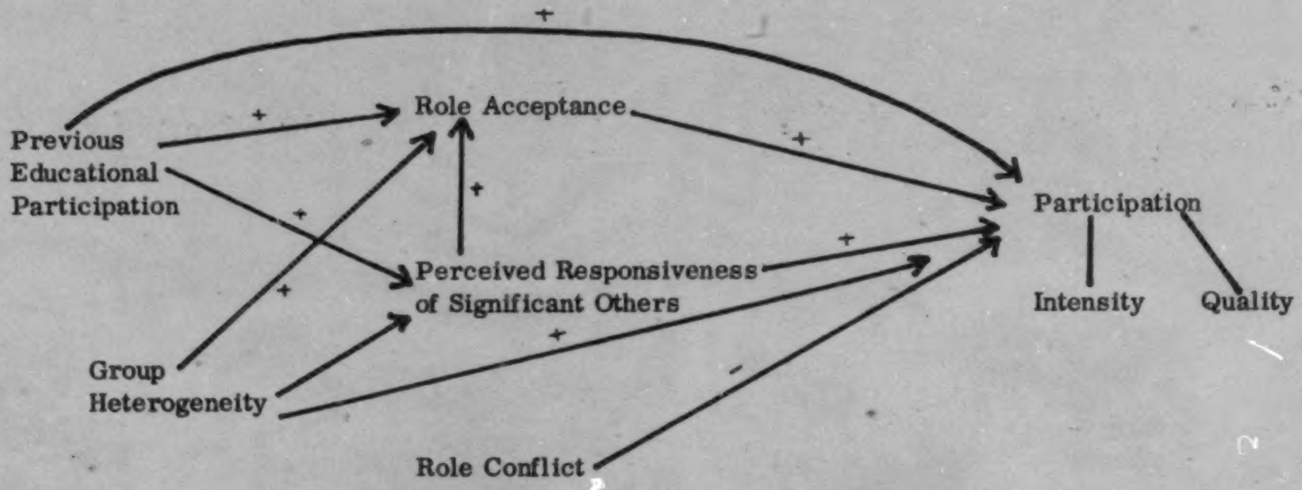
The heterogeneity of the group is hypothesized to be a concurrent variable with both direct and indirect effects on levels of participation in the planning task.

Both role acceptance and perceived responsiveness of significant others are hypothesized to behave as intervening variables between previous educational participation and levels of participation in the planning task.

The arrows in the model indicate the direction of the hypothesized relationships. The major dependent variable - participation in educational planning - is measured in terms of two indicators, intensity and quality of participation.

Figure 2

Main Causal Structure of Participation in the Educational Planning Task Hypothesized in the Study


+
Previous
Educational
Participation
+
Role Acceptance
+
+
+
+
Participation
Perceived Responsiveness
of Significant Others
+
+
Intensity
Quality
Group
Heterogeneity
-
Role Conflict

C. Operationalization of Variables

This section addresses itself to the methods used in this study to measure the variables depicted in the chart on the preceding page. The items used to measure the various antecedent variables discussed earlier are presented in the Appendix.

1. The Dependent Variable: Participation

In much of the research on voluntary participation there has been a tendency to treat participation as a primitive term, as a concept easily understood, which conveys an unequivocal meaning.

In this study, educational participation has two definitions. In the examination of the effect of antecedent variables upon educational participation, we define participation as the number of educational acts (both at the action and the policy level) in which the individual has engaged. Participation is measured in terms of an index based on summed scores, ranging from 0 (no participation at all) to 6 (participation in six forms of educational participation). This index of participation is subsequently called "previous educational participation" and enters the causal model of participation as an independent variable.

In the examination of the effect of concurrent variables, since we are dealing at this point with one particular form of educational participation, we conceptualize participation differently. Here we define participation as the individual's (1) amount of time given to the educational planning task; and (2) performance of the planning task in a way congruent with the specifications attached to this task. In this second definition, participation has two components: one is quantitative, i.e., the number of hours the individual devotes to the planning task; the other is qualitative, i.e., the degree to which the individual in fact behaves as an educational planner.

The quantitative dimension of participation - intensity - will be measured by the hours per week spent by the individual in formal planning team meetings and in preparation for these meetings. Quality of participation - performance - has been measured by an index ranging from 1 to 5, which indicates the frequency with which an individual executes seven task specifications considered pertinent to the planning activity. (Refer to the Methodological Appendix for the specific items employed for this and other variables.)

2. The Independent Variables

Role Acceptance. The assertion that broad citizen involvement in policy-level participation leads to "better" policy outcomes presupposes that the participants will behave in a manner that is appropriate to the specifications of the task. The variable, "role acceptance", seeks to establish the degree to which participants recognize the formal expectations attached to the planning task. Tannenbaum (1968) maintains that formal organization norms (which can be extended in our case to mean specifications attached to the planning role) are easily measurable. By this he means that it is possible to identify these organizational norms.

Since the formation of the various planning teams, all participants have been repeatedly told of four expectations attached to their planner role: that the needs and desires of the various community segments (parents and citizens in general; students; teachers and other school staff) must be considered when designing educational proposals, that their proposals must be validated (i.e., have educational, legal, and financial bases), that the proposals must be designed to address needs of students, and their proposals are intended to be specific directives for action, not broad suggestions. These role expectations have been transmitted by the project support staff, both officially (through booklets and written communications to the planning teams) and informally (in conversations between project support staff and participants in the planning task).

Role acceptance is measured by a summed-score index, using forced-choice items. The role acceptance index produces scores ranging from 0 to 4 points.

Perceived Responsiveness of Significant Others. As the volunteer planner engages in the design and formulation of planning proposals, he develops certain expectations of how the established decision-makers will react to these proposals. Perceived responsiveness of significant others is defined as the degree of receptiveness of the Board of Education, the superintendent, and the Central Office administrators, and the impact these proposals are expected to have in educational policies considered by these three groups. Two items were employed to construct this variable. The scale ranges from 6 to 30 points.

Role Congruency and Role Conflict. The variable measuring role congruency and role conflict was created by combining the individual's degree of role acceptance and his perceived responsiveness of significant others. If an individual has moderate to high levels of role acceptance (a score of at least 2 points) and moderate to high levels of perceived responsiveness of significant others (at least 19 points), he is assumed to face a situation of role congruency. If he possesses moderate to high levels of role acceptance but low levels of perceived responsiveness, he is considered to face a situation of role conflict. Individuals who have low levels of role acceptance are considered as deviants and not included in the analysis of this variable.

The variable "role congruency/conflict" was formed by combining scores in "role acceptance" and "perceived responsiveness". It is therefore highly correlated with these two variables. For that reason, we are not entering the variable "role congruency/conflict" in the causal model, but we are treating it separately.

Group Heterogeneity. In the participatory planning task, as carried out in Project Redesign, anybody served by or working for the school district can participate. We are categorizing the participants in four major groups: parents and citizens, students, teachers and teacher aides, and nonteaching school staff (administrators and support staff).

In this study, group heterogeneity refers to the presence of these four groups in each of the planning teams. It is defined as the degree to which a particular planning team has participants from each of these groups.

The variable "group heterogeneity" is measured in three levels: high, medium and low. If a planning team is characterized by the frequent meeting attendance and participation in the discussions by individuals from at least three groups, the team was considered high in heterogeneity. If only two groups were involved in a planning team, the team was rated medium in heterogeneity. And if the team had one predominant group of participants, it was characterized as low in heterogeneity.

The determination of group heterogeneity was based on observation of the interactions at the planning team meetings and was done by two judges. Their agreement was identical in the rating of 9 of the 11 planning teams. Since all variable in the model are measured at the individual level, each participant received the heterogeneity score oorresponding to his planning team.

NOTES

1. The participatory educational planning task occurs within the context of Project Redesign. This project began as a result of the superintendent's initiative and the willingness of the Board of Education to have a group of citizens examine the school system and propose ways to meet its future societal needs. The project started in 1972 and was expected to produce a Master Plan by mid-1975.

   The PAUSD, at the time of the project, served a student body of about 13,000, located in 20 elementary schools and 6 high schools.

2. This should not be exaggerated, however. Part of the participatory planning process, as spelled out in Project Redesign, calls for careful "validating" of the results of the planning efforts before these proposals are presented to the Board. Essentially, this means that proposals offered by the planning teams should have been subjected to examination, revision, and approval of those affected by the decision, namely, the community at large, teacher organizations, and administration.

CHAPTER III

ANTECEDENT CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

The focus of our study is participatory educational planning, a form of participation that affords both policy-level participation and a high degree of accessibility.

The main questions we seek to answer in this section are as follows:

(1) What are the social and educational characteristics of participants in the planning task? Does the existence of an easily-accessible channel of educational participation mean that new people become involved in the schools? Specifically, do participants in a high-accessibility form of participation possess attributes different from those of participants in low-accessibility forms of participation, such as the PTA leadership or membership in advisory committees?

(2) What is the relationship of the selected antecedent variables to the participants' previous level of educational participation? Do these variables show similar relationships among the various sets of participants in the task (i.e., parents, teachers and administrators/nonteaching staff)?

A. Characteristics of the Participants

A brief description of the recruitment process carried out within the project providing the setting for this study is pertinent at this point.

The first planning teams, the 5 to 15 member teams carrying out the planning task, were formed early in January 1974. Six additional teams were formed in June-July 1974, bringing the number of planning teams to eleven. The initial recruitment effort by the project staff consisted of sending letters to all families served by the PAUSD and to all teaching and nonteaching staff members. In addition, ads were placed in the local newspaper, soliciting the involvement of volunteers in the planning teams. About 1000 high school students were contacted through school presentations. Through all these means combined, an audience of approximately 30,000 must have been reached - about 15,000 through individual letters and 15,000 through ads, newsletters, and school bulletin notices.

About 450 persons came to the four introductory community meetings. Of these, 65 desired to participate and became members of the first wave of planning teams. The second wave of planning teams attracted 135 additional members, bringing the number of individuals who joined the project[1] to about 190 members.

Table 2

Composition of Initial Participants by Group

Group	Percentage	Number
Parents/Citizens without school children	38	71
Teachers	25	47
Students	18	33
Administrators/Non-teaching staff	20	37
	100	188

As can be noted, most of those who demonstrated an interest in participating were either parents or teachers. Of course, not all of those who had an initial interest became stable participants. The withdrawal or dropout rate, however, was more or less constant, at the rate of about 7 percent per month.

The breakdown of participants who became stable participants - those who stayed in the project for at least six months - and who constitute the subjects of this study - was as follows:

Table 3

Composition of Stable Participants by Group

Group	Percentage	Number
Parents/Citizens without school children	37	42
Teachers	33	38
Students	14	16
Administrators/Non-teaching staff	16	18
	100	114

A comparison between Tables 1 and 2 shows that the highest withdrawal rates occurred among students and nonteaching staff (including administrators). Though 33 students joined, 17 (or about 52 percent) subsequently left; in the case of administrators/nonteaching staff members, 37 joined and 19 (or 51 percent) withdrew over a period covering 15 months.

1. Sociodemographic Characteristics

   Those who became stable participants possessed sociodemographic characteristics resembling those of educational participants reported in other studies of suburban school districts. The largest proportion of participants was that of parents and teachers - both of whom have the most direct concern with educational issues - parents as clients and teachers as professionals. The number of parents participating in the project represented half of one percent of the population of parents in the district; the number of teachers represented 5 percent of the district's teachers.[2]

The mean age of participants was 36 years, with almost no participants between 20-29 years of age.

Table 4

Participants in the Planning Task by Age

Age Bracket	Percentage	Number
10 - 19 years	16	18
20 - 29	2	2
30 - 39	18	21
40 - 49	41	47
50 - 59	17	19
60 - 69	6	7
	100	114

In terms of educational levels, participants in the planning task constituted a highly-educated group. The mean level of education was 16.94 years; excluding students, it increased to 18.28 years.

Table 5

Participants in the Planning Task by Educational Level

Years of Education	Percentage	Number
9 - 12 *	19	20
13 - 14	2	2
15 - 16	4	6
17 and over	75	86
	100	114

* This category, except for two parents, includes only students.

The area served by the PAUSD is a sophisticated community with a large number of persons in professional/technical and managerial occupations (40 and 50 percent, respectively);[3] yet, the proportion of college graduates among the adult participants in the planning task - 75 percent - was markedly greater than that of the community as a whole, estimated to be 40 percent.[4]

Grouping the participants by occupational category shows a large number of professionals, and among these, an overwhelming proportion of persons in education or education-related fields. Eighty-three percent of the professionals were teachers, former teachers, educational writers or consultants, and college professors.

Table 6

Participants in the Planning Task by Occupational Category

Occupation	Percentage	Number
Professionals:		
Education-related profession	62	71
Other profession	13	15
Homemakers	8	9
White-collar	2	2
Blue-collar	0	0
Students	15	17
	100	114

Reasons for Participating in the Planning Task

The fact that most participants belonged to education-related professions suggests that for these participants, involvement in the planning task might be seen as a natural extension of occupational interest. This interpretation receives support when we examine participants' reasons for joining this activity.

Among the four sets of participants in the planning task, a "special interest in education" was mentioned as the most important reason for involvement by 26 percent of the participants. In addition, the task's relationship with the participants' professional background and interest was mentioned by an additional 10 percent. Looking at the proportion within groups, it can be noted that "a special interest in education" was the most salient reason among adult participants, particularly among the administrators/nonteaching staff groups.

While the planning task provided for policy-level participation, the desire to have a voice in decision-making did not seem an important reason for the majority of participants. Of the entire group, only 16 percent of participants said that a wish to participate in decisions affecting the district had motivated their participation. In the case of teachers, however, 25 percent of them mentioned this reason as the most important one. The specific nature of the task, planning and dealing with the future, was not significant in leading individuals to participate. It was mentioned by 12 percent, most of them teachers.

Another reason frequently mentioned by participants was that they were "personally asked to join", either by project staff or personal friends already participating in educational activities. This reason was mentioned by 19 percent of the participants and was clearly the most important reason for students. It was also a very important reason among parents and slightly less so among teachers (19 percent and 17 percent, respectively).

Why was the issue of personal recruitment so important among students and parents ? Both of them are clients of the school system. A probing among these respondents revealed a number of reasons: (a) for some students and parents, "being asked" is important, because of the feeling that their participation was "wanted" or "welcome"; (b) participation at the policy level may attract so few individuals that school personnel and other participants see themselves forced to appeal to those who are persons well known for their educational interest and activism; and (c) for some individuals, to be asked to participate in policy-level activities was seen as an honor not to be refused.

A further examination of Table 7 indicates that only 10 percent of the respondents joined because of "dissatisfaction" with the educational system. This reason ranged from 5 to 11 percent among adult participants, but was mentioned as a most important reason by 22 percent of the students. (The students who stated that they were dissatisfied with the school system had all held office in student body governments and had participated in various other school and district-level committees.) The findings for the majority of participants suggest that, in the absence

Table 7

Main Reasons Stated for Joining the Planning Task by Group

Reasons	Parents		Teachers		Administrators/ Nonteaching Staff		Students		Total	
I was asked personally to participate in Project Redesign.	19%	(10)	17%	(9)	(5%)	(1)	44%	(8)	19%	(28)
I felt dissatisfied with the present school system.	11	(6)	6	(3)	5	(1)	22	(4)	10	(14)
I have a special interest in educational issues.	28	(15)	23	(12)	43	(9)	6	(1)	26	(37)
I have a general interest in social issues.	7	(4)	6	(3)	5	(1)	22	(4)	8	(12)
I am interested in the idea of planning and preparing for the future.	11	(6)	17	(9)	10	(2)	0		12	(17)
I wanted to participate in decisions that will affect the school system.	11	(6)	25	(13)	19	(4)	0		16	(23)
Project Redesign is closely related to my professional background and interests.	13	(7)	6	(3)	14	(3)	6	(1)	10	(14)
	N=54		N=52		N=21		N=18		N=145*	

* The number of responses in each category is greater than the actual number of subjects in the study because in some cases respondents stated two or more main reasons for joining the planning task.

of a major conflict in a school district, those who participate in policy-level activities tend to be satisfied with both their educational system and their school district. It appears that those who are extremely critical of the schools tend to avoid participation in this kind of activity. (Judging from a needs assessment survey carried out by personnel projects, the PAUSD does have a group of dissatisfied people, who "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with the assertions that "the PAUSD gives their citizens their money's worth" (27 percent); "teachers in the district do their job well" (13 percent); and "students are treated equally or fairly in the district" (36 percent.)[5]

2. Involvement in Educational and Civic Activities

Participants in all four groups appeared to be very similar in terms of their educational involvement experience and civic and social affiliations. As Table 7 indicates, most participants had several years of educational membership and similar levels of previous educational participation. A significant proportion of them (about 45 percent) had held a previous educational leadership office and many belonged to at least one civic or social voluntary organization.

A characteristic shared very uniformly by the participants was their willingness to give a substantial amount of their free time to involvement in civic and social activities of their choice. Though the great majority of participants in the planning task were employed full-time (this applied even to students, 60 percent of whom held part-time jobs), they were willing to give an average of six hours a week of their free time to volunteer involvement. The fact that participants are so willing to give considerable time to voluntary involvement, even though they are "busy" people suggests that "time" is a very subjective category. Many participants expressed the opinion that "if you are interested in something or enjoy something, you make time for it".

Table 8
Levels of Educational and Civic Involvement* by Group (in Means)

	Parents	Teachers	Adm./Nontch. Staff	Students
Years of educational association	5.81	12.84	12.06	--
Leadership experience	.43	.47	.38	.50
Involvement in auxiliary and advisory activities	3.05	3.16	2.81	2.94
Previous educational participation	3.94	4.03	3.57	3.38
Number of memberships in civic/ social organizations	1.78	1.67	1.88	1.33
Hrs. per week willing to give to civic/social participation	7.79	6.70	5.40	7.76

* The specific items used to measure these and other antecedent variables are found in the Appendix.

3. Educational Orientations and Opinions

The data show that the participants in the planning task, considered by group, had similar educational orientations and opinions.

There was little discrepancy in the various means across the four groups of participants regarding their feeling of efficacy vis-à-vis administrators, their beliefs about citizen involvement in decision-making, and their opinions about the responsiveness of school authorities to the various community segments.

Table 9

Educational Orientations and Opinions by Group (in Means)

	Parents	Teachers	Administrators/ Nonteaching Staff	Students
Feeling of efficacy over administrators	2.56	2.45	2.69	2.63
Belief about the citizen role in school decisions	2.59	2.34	2.62	2.50
Belief about the role of administrators	1.97	2.15	2.29	1.88
Belief about the role of the Board of Education	2.13	2.06	2.00	2.13
Educational role of the Board	3.23	2.56	3.00	2.86
Educational role of admin.	4.10	3.77	4.43	3.29
Educational role of parents	2.80	2.32	2.64	2.71
Educational role of teachers	3.40	4.42	4.21	4.14
Educational role of students	2.20	2.65	2.50	3.29
Level of satisfaction with school district performance	3.33	3.77	4.25	3.81
Belief about responsiveness of school district to all community segments	3.11	3.00	3.43	3.55

The most noticeable difference among the groups concerned their degree of satisfaction with school district performance. While most participants seemed to be moderately to highly satisfied with the performance by school district personnel, the administrators/nonteaching staff in the planning task showed the greatest degree of satisfaction. Another significant difference occurred in the degree of importance participants would give to administrators, parents and teachers in the decision-making process of the school system. Participating teachers and students believed that teachers should have the most important role in the decision-making process of the school system. Participating teachers and students believed that teachers should have the most important role in the decision-making process. Both groups rated the role of administrators as second in importance. Participating students - unlike the three adult groups - believed that students should have a very important role in decision-making.

The educational orientations and opinions of the participants reflect the different positions they occupy in the school system. Teachers, for instance, thought that teachers should have the most important role in decision-making; administrators/nonteaching staff stated administrators should have the most important role and showed the greatest degree of satisfaction with the performance of school district personnel; students thought that students should have a salient part in the decision-making process.

To the degree that different sets of participants bring with them differing views and perceptions - particularly about the role of various actors in the decision-making process of the school district - a participatory planning activity is likely to result, at least, in a beneficial exchange of opinions.

B. Comparison with Participants in Low-Accessibility Forms of Participation

The sociodemographic description of the participants in the planning task shows that they are a relatively older and highly educated group of participants. Are they different from participants in forms of participation with less accessibility? How do they differ from PTA leaders, for example?

We will test the hypothesis that high-accessibility forms of participation lead to a set of participants different from that in low-accessibility forms of participation. To test this assumption, participants in the planning task are compared with two other groups of participants in the school district: members in PTA leadership positions and in district advisory committees.[6] Table 10 offers a comparison among several sociodemographic characteristics.

The comparison of the three types of participants shows no statistically significant differences in the participants' age and educational levels. In all three cases, those involved tend to be in their mid-30's. In terms of educational levels, participants in the planning task have slightly higher levels of education than PTA leaders, while resembling advisory committee participants. Occupationally, participants in the planning task are similar to advisory committee members but different from PTA leaders, since the latter include a larger number of homemakers.

The inclusion of students in the reporting of sociodemographic characteristics of participants in the planning task masks differences that are revealed when we examine only the adult participants. Excluding students, the mean age increases to 41, years of education to 18.28, and the professional category includes 88 per cent of the participants.

Table 10

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants in High-Accessibility and Low-Accessibility Forms of Participation

Sociodemographic Characteristics	Planning Task Participants	PTA Leaders	Advisory Committee Members
Sex			
Men	42% (48)	6% (4)	45% (20)
Women	58 (66)	94 (67)	55 (24)
Age			
10-19	16% (18)	0%	9% (4)
20-29	2 (2)	4 (3)	4 (2)
30-39	18 (21)	53 (37)	33 (15)
40-49	41 (47)	36 (25)	38 (17)
50-59	17 (19)	7 (5)	16 (7)
60-69	6 (7)	0	0
Mean age bracket	3.59*	3.46	3.47
Years of education			
12 years or less	18% (20)	3% (2)	9% (4)
13-16 years	7 (8)	59 (41)	16 (7)
17 and over	75 (86)	39 (27)	76 (34)
Mean years of education	16.94*	16.24	17.27
Occupational levels			
Professional	75% (86)	23% (16)	70% (32)
Homemaker	8 (9)	73 (52)	17 (8)
White-collar	2 (2)	4 (3)	4 (2)
Blue-collar	0	0	0
Student	15 (17)	0	9 (4)

* A t-test comparing means of education and age of participants in the planning task with the same means for PTA leaders and advisory committee members showed no statistically significant differences at the .10 level, two-tailed test.

This indicates that opening the process of educational participation at the policy level appeals mostly to professionals. This finding also suggests that even in channels allowing a high degree of accessibility, a selection mechanism is at work. In this case, however, it is a self-selection mechanism because individuals appear to decide by themselves whether they meet the necessary qualifications (in terms of knowledge or verbal skills) for the task. Informal inquiries as to why individuals with lower levels of education or in blue-collar jobs were not participants in the planning task produced comments such as, "he felt he would be dealing mainly with 'doctors' and 'professionals' " or "she was afraid her limited vocabulary would show up". Also, our data show that the withdrawal rate was highest among students and nonteaching staff (mostly secretaries), the two groups most likely to feel less competent in terms of educational levels.

While opening the channels of participation at the policy level may not result in the presence of participants representing the various occupations and educational levels of citizens in the community, the new set of participants constitutes a group of educationally-qualified and presumably competent individuals not otherwise involved. In other words, opening the channels of participation tends to bring forward a pool of useful but relatively under-utilized pool of human resources.

Significant differences appear when we compare participants in the planning task with other participants in terms of their educational and organizational experience. Compared to PTA leaders, participants in the planning task have lesser levels of leadership experience, involvement in auxiliary and advisory activities, and educational participation.

Table 11

Participants in High-Accessibility and Low-Accessibility Forms of Participation by Organizational Experience and Levels of Educational Involvement (in Means)

Organizational Experience and Educational Involvement	Planning Task Participants	PTA Leadership	Advisory Committee Members
Years of educational association	9.54	7.70	9.96
Leadership experience	.45	1.00 *	.75 *
Involvement in auxiliary and advisory activities	3.03	4.25 *	3.19
Previous Educational participation	3.83	5.58 *	4.13
No. of memberships in civic or social organizations	1.73	2.20 *	1.95

* Indicates that a t-test of this mean, compared to the mean of participants in the planning task showed a statistically-significant difference at the .10 level two-tailed test.

The greater number of years of educational association in the case of participants in the planning task is somewhat distorted because teacher participants had a mean of 13 years of educational affiliation. (There are very few teachers who are not affiliated with a teachers' organization.)

On the other hand, participants in the planning task are quite similar to participants in advisory committees. The only statistically-significant difference - leadership experience - indicates that participants in the planning task, compared to other types of participants, are persons with lower levels of educational leadership experience. For instance, while 25 percent of the membership in advisory committees report no leadership experience, 55 percent of the participants in the planning task have not held an office in an educational group.

This finding is important because it gives evidence that opening the channels for policy-level participation produces, to some degree, a group of participants who have not previously shared in the "boundary-spanning" process of the school system (see above, p. 12).

Do participants in the planning task, because of their more limited exposure to the boundary-spanning process of the school district, hold different views toward the educational system, its governance, and the role of various groups in the decision-making process of the schools?

We will test the hypothesis that participants in the high-accessibility form of participation possess educational orientations and opinions that differ from those of participants in low-accessibility forms of participation. The specific items used to measure all these orientations and opinions are found in the Appendix.

Table 12

Participants in High-Accessibility and Low-Accessibility Forms of Participation by Various Educational Orientations and Opinions (in Means)

	Planning Task Participants	PTA Leadership	Advisory Committee Members
Feelings of efficacy over administrators	2.51	2.76 *	2.77 *
Belief about the citizen role in school decisions	2.44	2.52	2.45
Belief about the role of administrators	2.10	2.18	2.13
Belief about the role of the Board of Education	2.06	2.11	2.00
Educational role of the Board	2.74	3.15 *	2.66
Educational role of the administrators	3.93	4.59 *	4.28 *
Educational role of parents	2.53	2.78	2.72
Educational role of teachers	3.95	3.60 *	4.04
Educational role of students	2.51	1.66 *	2.02 *
Level of satisfaction with the school district performance	3.67	3.63	4.09 *
Belief about responsiveness of school district to all community segments	3.13	3.44 *	3.51 *

* Indicates that a t-test of this mean, compared to the mean of participants in the planning task, showed a statistically-significant difference at the .10 level, two-tail test.

Participants in the planning task are not different from other participants in their definition of the roles of the board and the administrators. In all three cases, the tendency is to consider that both board members and administrators should make educational decisions by combining the administrators' recommendations and the expressed needs and demands of citizens. Relatively few participants believe that decisions should be made solely in response to community needs or on the basis of educational expertise.

Differences among participants do emerge along several important dimensions. Participants in the planning task do not perceive administrators as highly responsive as other participants do. This is especially true among teachers in the planning task, whose mean level of "feeling of efficacy over administrators" is 2.45 Also, participants in the planning task are less certain than the other two types of participants that the school district is responsive to all segments of the community. (This is the case for teachers and parents in the planning task, whose mean "belief about responsiveness of the school district to all community segments" is 3.00 and 3.11, respectively.)

More marked differences arise among the participants' allocation of decision-making roles within the school system. Unlike PTA leaders, participants in the planning task rank the board, administrators, and parents as less important in the decision-making process, while believing that teachers and students should have a greater voice. They are also different from advisory committee members in considering this role of administrators as lower and that of students as higher in importance.

Why is it that although attitudinal differences between participants in low-accessibility and high-accessibility forms of participation exist, these differences are not very great? A partial answer can be given by the fact that the various modes of educational involvement, and even the pattern of social and civic memberships, are related. Table 13 presents evidence in this regard.

Table 13

Relationship Between Various Modes of Educational Involvement and the Level of Educational Participation (in Pearson correlations)

	Planning Task Participants	PTA Leaders	Advisory Committee Members
Involvement in auxiliary and advisory activities	.22*	.31*	.16*
Leadership experience	.44*	.45*	.10
Years of educational association	.23*	-.10	.14
Number of memberships in civic and social organizations	.06	.25*	.30*

* Indicates correlations significant at the .10 level or less

It can be noted that there are substantial correlations between the participants' levels of educational participation, and their level of involvement in auxiliary and advisory activities and their leadership experience. According to these relationships, the more individuals have been involved in auxiliary activities, the greater the rate of their action- and policy-level participation; likewise, individuals who have held office show greater rates of educational participation than those who have not. This suggests that most participants have been subject to a similar socialization experience with the school district, which may account for their similarity in attitudes.

C. The Relative Effect of Antecedent Variables on Participants in the Planning Task

Participants in the planning task are persons with a history of prior involvement in educational activities. Their levels of educational participation - though lower than those of PTA leaders and advisory committee members - are high compared to the population at large. This is evident in Table 15.

Table 15

Levels of Educational Participation Among Various Types of Participants (in Means)

	Parents in Community	Planning Task Participants	Planning Task Parents Only	PTA Leaders	Advisory Committee Members
Educational Participation	3.21	3.83*	3.94*	5.58*	4.13*

* Indicates that a t-test of this mean compared to the mean of educational participation of the sample of parents in the community showed a statistically significant difference at the .005 level.

Furthermore, only 7 per cent of the adults in the planning task were not members of an educational association and only 9 per cent of all participants had no previous involvement in auxiliary or advisory educational activities.

If moderate to high levels of educational participation characterize a large number of participants in the planning task, it becomes important to understand what factors affect levels of educational participation. In doing this analysis, we shall consider educational participation as a variable to be explained (a dependent variable) and examine how antecedent variables described in Chapter II of this study affect it.

Our presumption is that the various antecedent factors do not have a uniform effect among the four groups of participants in the planning activity. Socialization and idiosyncratic factors possibly have a stronger effect in the case of parents and students since their participation is more "voluntary" than in the case of teachers and administrators/nonteaching staff. In the case of the latter two, educational attitudes might have a stronger impact than among parents because their participation may be prompted by job-related considerations.

Table 16 below presents a set of four separate regression equations on educational participation for each group of adult participants in the planning task. (Students are not included in this comparison because their scale of educational participation is not strictly comparable to that of adults.) The coefficients reported in each case are standardized beta weights which permit us to assess the effect of each independent variable while controlling for the effects of other independendent variables in the regression equation.

Table 16

The Effect of Antecedent Variables Upon Educational Participation by Group*

Socialization Factors	Parents	Teachers	Administrators/ Nonteaching Staff
Sex	.272	.110	-.134
Family climate about voluntary participation	.265	-.178	.061
Years of education	.070	.330	.022
Total Socialization Factors	$R^2 = .13$	$R^2 = .15$	$R^2 = .02$
Idiosyncratic Factors			
Feeling of personal control	.301	.332	-.053
Sense of disposable time	.154	.006	.117
Total Idiosyncratic Factors	$R^2 = .10$	$R^2 = .11$	$R^2 = .02$
Associational Experience			
Years of educational association	.293	.039	.746
Number of memberships in civic or social organizations	.126	.116	.312
Total Associational Experience	$R^2 = .14$	$R^2 = .02$	$R^2 = .36$
Educational Attitudes			
Feeling of efficacy over administrators	.060	.104	.175
Belief about the role of the Board of Education	-.122	.098	-.388
Educational role of parents	.581	.315	.169
Total Educational Attitudes	$R^2 = .14$	$R^2 = .11$	$R^2 = .12$
All factors combined	$R^2 = .52$	$R^2 = .30$	$R^2 = .47$

* None of the independent variables in the regression equations for each group had intercorrelations greater than .64. The degree of collinearity present in these regressions is, therefore, minimal. (In the four cases where correlations were greater than .50, they ranged from .52 to .64.)

1. The Effect of Socialization Factors

Of the three variables included among the socialization factors, sex (being a woman) and the family's climate (having one or both parents involved in voluntary activities) have strong and independent effects among participating parents. Although, as we have noted, parents who participate are characterized by high levels of education, the individual's level of education appears to make a weak contribution to increases in the level of educational participation. Our first explanation was that the coefficient was low because of the small variability in levels of education among participating parents (mean: 17.74; standard deviation: 1.93), yet, teachers show strong effects for levels of education upon participation, while their educational levels have a smaller variance than that of parents (mean: 18.65; standard deviation: 1.16). A more reasonable explanation, therefore, might be that education does not so much influence levels of educational participation, but supplies the pool of those who will be interested in participation. (A similar conclusion is made by Almond and Verba in their study of political participation in the Civic Culture, 1965, p. 319.)

In the case of teachers, sex also contributes to educational participation, though, as anticipated, its effects are weaker (.110) than among parents. Family climate appears to have a negative and moderate effect (-.178) and their levels of education to have a strong and positive effect over educational participation.

Among administrators/nonteaching staff, sex makes a negative contribution, while family climate and years of education produce an insignificant effect.

Socialization factors explain 13 percent of the variance of participation among parents; and 15 percent of the variance among teachers; but only 2 percent of the variance for administrators/nonteaching staff.

2. The Effect of Idiosyncratic Variables

A sense of personal control affects levels of educational participation positively and strongly in the case of parents and teachers (.301 and .332, respectively), yet it does not show significant effects in the case of administrators/nonteaching staff.

The individual's sense of disposable time [illegible] the other hand, shows moderate effects in the case of parents and adminis[illegible]s/nonteaching staff, but no effect among teachers.

Idiosyncratic factors account for a moderate portion of the variance in participation levels in the case of parents and teachers (.10 and .11 percent, respectively), but an insignificant amount in the case of administrators/nonteaching staff. This latter finding agrees with the expectation that educational participation among administrators/nonteaching staff might be more related to job requirements than to personal factors.

3. The Effects of Associational Experience

Years of membership in a formal educational organization has very strong effects upon the levels of educational participation among administrators/nonteaching staff, and strong effects in the case of parents. However, it has no significant effects in the case of teachers.

On the other hand, the individual's degree of involvement in civic and social organizations shows effects among the three sets of participants. The more the number of civic and social groups to which the adult individual belongs, the greater the level of educational participation.

As a set, organizational experience variables explain 36 percent of the variance of educational participation among administrators/nonteaching staff and 14 percent of the variance in the case of parents. The explained variance for teachers is quite low, only 2 percent. The small contribution of affiliation in a professional group to increased levels of participation in the case of teachers may be due to the fact that - as several informants stated - many teachers consider their professional organization not as an outlet for the pursuit of professional interests, but rather as a bread-and-butter union whose main function is that of "making sure teachers have salaries that reflect the increase in the standard of living" and providing benefits for teachers, such as "discounts in travel tours", "good medical insurance", and "cheap tires".

4. The Effect of Various Educational Attitudes

Of the three educational attitudes included in the regression, the belief that parents should have a major role in the decision-making process of the school shows effects among all participants. Its effects are particularly strong in the case of parents and teachers (.581 and .315, respectively). The belief that the Board of Education should play a representative role, according to our findings, affects in an inverse way the individual's level of educational participation. The more the individual considers that the role of the Board should be representative, the less he tends to participate. Presumably, individuals who believe that the Board should be representative tend to participate less in educational activities and issues because they think that it is the Board's function to make sure citizen needs are attended to.

In all cases, participation is associated with a feeling that administrators in the school district are responsive to one's action.

The three educational attitudes included in the regression explain a small proportion of the variance in educational participation. In the case of parents, the explained variance is equal to that accounted for by associational experience factors, i.e., 14 percent. In the cases of teachers and administrators/nonteaching staff, the effect of educational attitudes is not as substantial as we anticipated. The effect is weak: 11 and 12 percent, respectively.

The four sets of antecedent factors combined do explain a considerable proportion of the variance in educational participation among the participants. As expected, it is highest for parents, in whose case the explained variance amounts to 52 percent. These factors account for 47 percent of the variance among administrators/nonteaching staff, and 30 percent of the variance among teachers.

Summary

Participants in the planning task can be characterized as a group of persons (mostly professionals) with a strong and rather stable interest in educational activities. They are also a group who are not dissatisfied with the educational system and feel generally efficacious vis-à-vis school administrators.

Though participants in the planning task show a number of similar educational attitudes, they differ in opinions about the role that teachers and students should play in the decision-making processes of the schools. This difference is probably due to the opinions of teachers and students among the participants, which suggests that participatory planning facilitates the presence of groups with differing perceptions of the school system.

While the planning is a highly-accessible form of participation, the new set of participants is not very different from participants at other activities. Yet, a significant difference occurs between participants in high- and low-accessibility channels: participants in planning have lower levels of educational experience and previous involvement in auxiliary and advisory activities. This signifies that the high-accessibility form of participation allows the entrance of a group of participants who had previously been absent from the "boundary-spanning" process of the school system.

An examination of the antecedent factors that lead to educational participation suggests that the participants in planning share a very similar socialization process in which idiosyncratic factors, associational experience, and a belief in the decision-making role of parents account for an average of 45 percent of the variance in levels of educational participation.

NOTES

1. This includes persons who attended at least one meeting of their planning team. About 20 persons signed to become members, but never came.

2. These percentages have been calculated on the basis of an estimated parent population of 8,000 and a teacher population of 700 members.

3. Grun and Grun Associates. Revised Employment Forecast for Palo Alto, 1980-1990. Report prepared for the Palo Alto Planning Commission, March 7, 1975.

4. School-Community Profile for the PAUSD. Project Redesign, PAUSD, November, 1973.

5. Needs Assessment Survey. Complete report. Project Redesign, PAUSD, April, 1974.

6. The PTA leadership included the district-level leadership, as well as the local leadership within each school. At the time of the study, the PAUSD had eleven district-level advisory committees, composed of citizens, students, teachers, and other school staff.

   Members in these two forms of participation were asked to fill out the same questionnaire (except for sections related exclusively to planning activities) which participants in the planning task responded to. Replies to the questionnaire were anonymous and voluntary. About 55 percent in each group returned the questionnaire. We cannot determine to what degree biases have been introduced in the replies. PTA leaders were especially recalcitrant respondents and had to be asked several times to return the questionnaire.

CHAPTER IV

CONCURRENT CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

We have examined the role that antecedent variables such as education and occupation play in leading individuals to participate in planning.

We now shift our focus to the examination of factors which may account for differences in patterns of participation after people become involved. We will concentrate on structural variables, i.e., on variables that can be manipulated by the school district.

Specifically, we will attempt to find out:

(1) What is the distribution of the selected concurrent variables among participants? Do the various groups of participants show similar levels of role acceptance, perceived responsiveness and role conflict?

(2) What are the distributions of our dependent variables - intensity and quality of participation?

(3) What are the effects of the concurrent variables upon intensity of participation? What are the effects of the concurrent variables upon quality of participation? Are these effects different among the various groups of participants?

(4) To what extent does previous educational participation have an effect upon the level of participation?

A. The Distribution of the Dependent and Concurrent Variables

1. The Quantity and Quality of Participation

Participatory planning has been advocated because it is assumed that volunteers will contribute time and effort to the planning task in "adequate"amounts. What consitutes an "adequate" amount of participation in terms of time is difficult to establish. We might agree that involvement of less than two hours per week is "low", since it would mean that the individual did little more than attend his weekly or biweekly meetings.

Participation in terms of quality is somewhat easier to assess. We define it in terms of the individual's self-reported behavior in compliance with several tasks included in his role as an educational planner.

Table 17

Intensity of Participation, by Group

Group	Mean Number of Hours/Week
Parents	4.35 (3.58) *
Teachers	3.66 (1.98)
Administrators/Nonteaching Staff	2.43 (1.28)
Students	4.00 (2.57)

* Figures in parentheses are standard deviations.

It can be seen that, on the average, parents contributed the most time, with a mean of 4.35 hours per week. Students were second with reported mean hours of 4.0 per week. Administrators/nonteaching staff contributed the least time. Their average figure is about 50 percent lower than that of parents.

The mean for the whole set of participants was 3.79 hours per week. Fifty-eight percent of the participants reported devoting at least 3 hours per week to the planning task. This finding is encouraging. It indicates that voluntary participation in a planning task does attract participants who will devote considerable time to the work. At the same time, these figures demonstrate a limitation of participatory planning: volunteers have only a limited amount of time to contribute and thus many weeks are required to complete a piece of work.

Table 18

Quality of Participation - Scores by Group

Group	Mean Quality of Participation Scores
Parents	3.98 (.60) *
Teachers	3.21 (.67)
Administrators/Nonteaching Staff	3.03 (.64)
Students	2.83 (.59)

* Figures in parentheses are standard deviations.

In terms of quality, teachers seemed to perform the planning role best; their mean was 3.21 out of a possible score of 5 points. Parents came in as second-best participants, whereas students obtained the lowest scores in terms of quality of participation.

The mean for the whole set of participants was 3.06. Sixty-one percent of participants had a score of at least 3 points. This finding indicates that the average volunteer planner performs his role relatively well.

An interesting finding is the apparently low relationship between the time given to the planning task (i.e., the participants' presence at planning team meetings and the time spent in preparation for these meetings and in the design of planning proposals) and the quality of their participation (i.e., their actual behavior as educational planners). This is indicated in Table 19 below.

Table 19

Correlations between the Intensity and Quality of Participation, by Group

Group	Pearson correlation coefficients
Parents	.30
Teachers	.54
Administrators/Nonteaching Staff	-.06
Students	.30
All Participants	.26

The highest correlation between the intensity and the quality of participation occurs among teachers, who report an association of .54. The lowest correlation appears in the case of administrators/nonteaching staff, with an association of -.06. The association between intensity and quality of participation for the entire set of participants is .26, which is a rather weak association, considering that both intensity and quality of participation are taken to be equivalent indicators of the same phenomenon, i.e., participation. The small correlations between these two indicators suggest that a greater amount of time devoted to the planning task will not necessarily result in better performance as an educational planner, and vice versa.

2. The Acceptance of the Planner Role

We have posited that the volunteer planner role represents a new role for a set of previously peripheral actors in the decision-making processes of the school district. The acceptance of this role was presumed to be more difficult for parents and students because they are the traditional "clients" of the organization.

Data in Table 20 shows that the average participant in all four groups had relatively high levels of role acceptance. Scale scores were trichotomized so that the acceptance of 3-4 role specifications was taken as a high level of role acceptance; the acceptance of at least two role specifications was considered a medium role acceptance; and the acceptance of only one role specification was considered a low level of role acceptance.

Table 20

Levels of Role Acceptance, by Group

	Parents	Teachers	Adm./Ntch Staff	Students	All
Low role acceptance	12%	13%	7%	18%	13%
Medium role acceptance	45%	26%	27%	24%	33%
High role acceptance	43%	61%	67%	59%	54%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

N = 114

Teachers showed the highest levels of role acceptance (mean score 2.61). As hypothesized, parents and students had the lowest levels of role acceptance, (mean scores of 2.40 and 2.50, respectively).

3. Perceived Responsiveness of Significant Others

Involvement in the planning activity (assuming that people act in a rational manner) presupposes that the participants believe that their efforts will be fruitful and that their planning proposals will have an eventual impact on policy decisions.

Table 21 shows that most participants in fact believe that the Board, the superintendent, and central office administrators will seriously consider their planning proposals. Further, the degree of perceived responsiveness, or optimism about planning outcomes, is very similar across the four groups of participants. Table 21 presents the information by levels of perceived responsiveness. Scale scores, ranging from 6 to 30 points, were trichotomized so that scores of 6-14 points were considered indicative of low perceived responsiveness; 15-22 points indicated medium responsiveness; and 23-30 points indicated high responsiveness.

Table 21

Perceived Responsiveness of Significant Others, by Group

Responsiveness Level	Parents	Teachers	Adm./Ntch. Staff	Students	All
Low perceived responsiveness	8%	14%	7%	6%	10%
Medium perceived responsiveness	57%	51%	57%	44%	56%
High perceived responsiveness	35%	35%	36%	50%	35%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

N = 114

Those who perceived the highest degree of responsiveness on the part of significant others were the students (mean score = 22.29), while those more skeptical were the parents (mean score = 19.95). Table 21 also shows that while most participants were optimistic about the responsiveness their proposals would receive, the level of optimism tended to be moderate. In other words, the participants did not have complete certitude that their planning efforts would have a strong impact on future policy decisions.

Over-all, participants in the planning task expressed belief in a higher degree of responsiveness on the part of the superintendent and the board than on the part of central office administrators. This finding was very consistent across the four groups of participants.

Table 22

Perceived Responsiveness on the Part of the Board of Education, the Superintendent, and Central Office Administrators by Group (in Means)*

	Parents	Teachers	Staff	Students	All
Perceived responsiveness on the part of the Board	6.92	7.08	6.4	7.24	6.88
Perceived responsiveness on the part of the Superintendent	6.97	6.92	8.0	7.65	7.13
Perceived responsiveness on the part of Central Office Administrators	6.05	6.24	6.2	7.41	6.27

* Scores in each of these subscales ranged from 2 to 10 points

We do not know how to account for the lower perceived responsiveness on the part of Central Office administrators. A plausible reason might be that since "Central Office administrators" includes a group of six administrators, participants in the planning task were less certain of how all of them would react to their planning proposals.

4. The Existence of Role Conflict

According to our definition of role conflict, less than half of the participants in all groups experience such conflict. The group experiencing the greatest amount of role conflict were teachers. The greatest number of role rejectors (those who either did not understand or did not accept the role) were students.

Table 23

Presence of Role Conflict, Role Congruency and Role Rejection by Group

Role Situation	Parents	Teachers	Staff	Students	All
Face a situation of role conflict	24%	32%	25%	22%	26%
Face a situation of role congruency	65	55	63	61	61
Role rejectors	12	13	13	17	13
	100	100	100	100	100

N = 114

5. Levels of Group Heterogeneity

Since the participants chose the planning team on which they worked, the nature of each planning team, in terms of the number and composition of its members, was not uniform.

Project personnel attempted to achieve heterogeneous teams by seeking the incorporation of teachers, students, parents, and administrators/nonteaching staff in teams where their representation was low. In spite of this effort, these teams retained, to a great extent, the level of heterogeneity which they showed from their inception.

Table 24

Number of Teams, by Level of Group Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity Level	Number of Teams
High Group Heterogeneity	3
Medium Group Heterogeneity	4
Low Group Heterogeneity	4
	11

A significant finding about the heterogeneity of the teams was that heterogeneity was determined fundamentally by the topic which each planning team dealt with. Planning teams dealing with topics such as adolescent education or teacher/learner relationships attracted participants representing all four groups and were also the largest teams. In contrast, teams dealing with narrow and specialized subjects, such as long-range financial needs, attracted only a small number of participants, most of them persons with substantial backgrounds in economic and financial analysis.

B. The Effect of Antecedent and Concurrent Variables on Participation in the Planning Task

Let us look at the direct and indirect effects of the independent variables in the causal structure proposed earlier (Figure 2).

This section employs multivariate regression analysis. Although the nature of the data is not strictly continuous, previous statistical analyses showed that many of the variables possessed interval-like properties. Since the dependent variable - participation - is examined in terms of two indicators, separate causal models are explored for participation in terms of intensity and in terms of quality.

The analysis that follows is done by group of participants.

1. The Case of Parents (N = 42)

As Table 25 indicates, the correlations[1] between the selected independent variables and participation are, in the majority of cases, positive and substantial.

Table 25

Correlations between Intervening and Dependent Variables - Parents

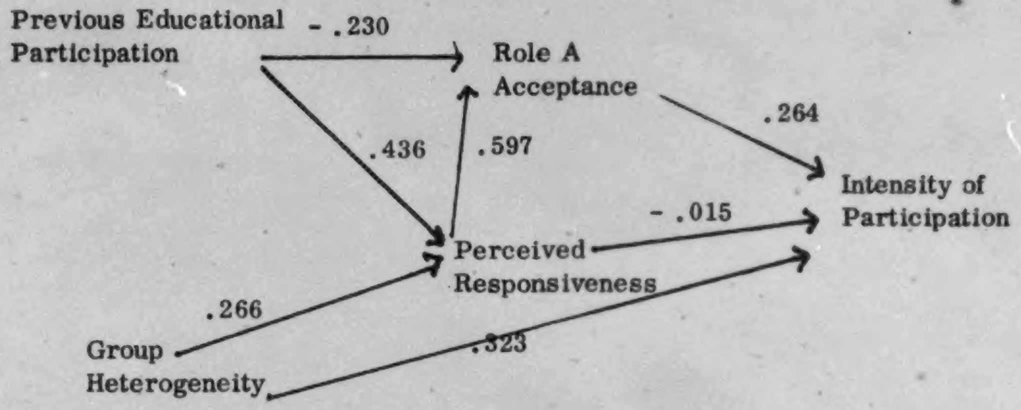
	Perceived Responsiveness	Role Acceptance	Intensity of Participation	Quality of Participation
Previous Educ. Participation	.421	.017	- .065	.055
Group Heterogeneity	.243	.235	.381	.127
Perceived Responsiveness	1.0	.519	.200	.265
Role Acceptance	.519	1.0	.332	.256

While the level of previous educational participation is not associated with the intensity or the quality of participation, previous educational participation is strongly associated with high levels of perceived responsiveness. The above table also shows that group heterogeneity affects the parents' level of perceived responsiveness and role acceptance positively and substantially, and also the intensity and quality of participation. In the case of parents, the optimism they have regarding planning proposals and the degree to which they understand the planning role show a strong relationship with the intensity and quality of participation in the planning task.

Table 25 shows the associations between the different variables under study. However, in order to assess the independent effects of each of the independent variables, we must look at the simultaneous effects. This can be done by a regression analysis. The controlled correlations or beta weights show the independent effects of each of the variables. We present the independent effect of each variable by means of the causal diagram hypothesized in Chapter II.

In the causal structure presented below (and in all subsequent ones), all path coefficients showing effects lower than .10 have been eliminated.[2]

Figure 3A - Causal Structure for Intensity of Participation - Parents



The application of controls on the independent variables results in lower independent effects,yet these variables maintain in most cases their relative importance and the same directional effects. The only instance in which there is a reversal is for the effect of previous educational participation on role acceptance. While the simple correlation between the two (.017) was insignificant, the independent effect of previous educational participation on role acceptance is negative and strong (-.230). There does not seem to be any ready explanation for this. This shows that previous educational participation does not help parents directly to accept the new (planner) role. The regression, however, shows that previous educational participation does have indirect positive effects upon the parent's intensity of participation; it affects positively the intensity of participation by means of increasing the parent's feeling of perceived responsiveness.

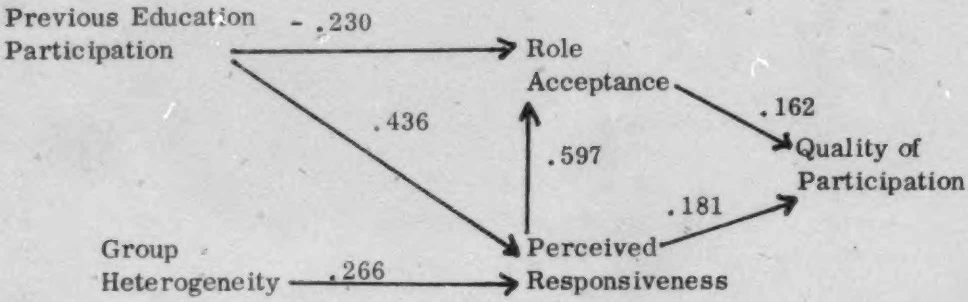
As indicated in our hypothesized causal diagram, role acceptance has positive and strong effects (beta = .264), upon the intensity of participation. Contrary to our hypothesis, perceived responsiveness has insignificant effects upon the parents' intensity of participation (beta =-.015).

Our causal model shows that group heterogeneity affects the intensity of participation both directly and indirectly. It affects the intensity of participation indirectly through increasing the levels of perceived responsiveness (beta = .266); its direct effect is quite strong (beta =.323). In the case of parents, group heterogeneity is the concurrent variable with the strongest direct effect on the intensity of participation. We will discuss the possible reasons for this in the following chapter.

The previous educational participation of parents and their levels of perceived responsiveness together account for 32 per cent of the variance in role acceptance. Previous educational participation and group heterogeneity, by contrast, account for 25 per cent of the variance in perceived responsiveness. This suggests that a significant amount of the variance of two important concurrent variables (namely, perceived responsiveness and role acceptance) is affected by the individual's previous educational experience. In other words, having participated previously in educational affairs predispose the individual to believe that school authorities are generally responsive to their efforts; on the other hand, previous educational experience does not seem to facilitate the acceptance of the new (planner) role.

The causal model estimated for participation in terms of intensity explains 21 per cent of the variance among parents, a rather considerable amount.

Figure 3B Causal Model for Quality of Participation - Parents



The application of the same causal model to quality of participation explains only a small portion of its variance ($R^2 = .09$). Nevertheless, both role acceptance and perceived responsiveness have moderate effects (betas .162 and .181, respectively).

Group heterogeneity, which has an effect on the intensity of participation, has no direct effect on quality of participation for parents. It does have a positive indirect effect. It affects the levels of perceived responsiveness (beta = .266).

2. The Case of Teachers (N = 38)

For teachers, the associations between the selected variables and the intensity and quality of participation appears to be less strong than for parents. Some of the associations are negative.

Table 26

Correlations Between Intervening and Dependent Variables - Teachers

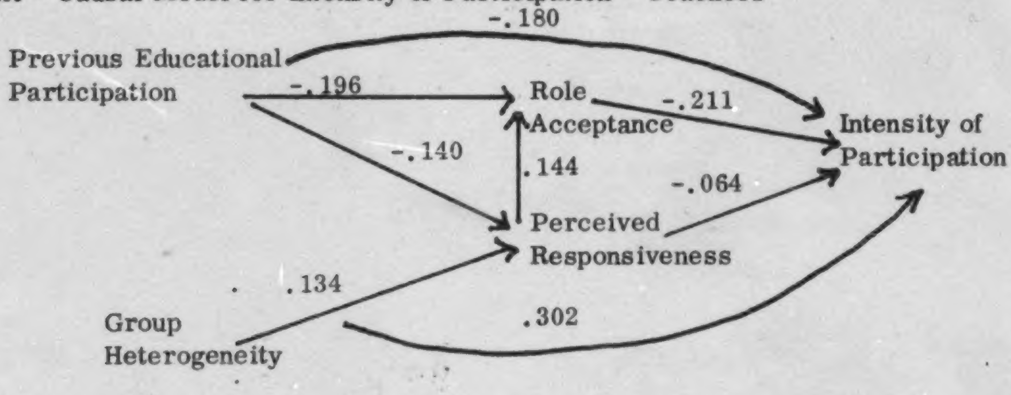
	Perceived Responsiveness	Role Acceptance	Intensity of Participation	Quality of Participation
Previous Educ. Participation	- .150	- .218	- .149	- .003
Group Heterogeneity	.145	.117	.282	.134
Perceived Responsiveness	1.0	.174	- .030	.106
Role Acceptance	.174	1.0	-.148	.156

According to the above correlations, in the case of teachers previous educational participation has a moderate negative effect on two key concurrent variables - role acceptance and perceived responsiveness - and also on both the intensity and quality of participation. According to these findings, previous educational participation decreases the teachers' level of perceived responsiveness on the part of the Board, the Superintendent, and Central Office administrators. The more teachers have been active in educational activities in the past, the less they are willing to accept the planner role. This suggests that previous educational involvement tends to render the teachers more skeptical about the behavior of the decision-makers in the school system; it also suggests that the more teachers have been involved in past educational activities, the less likely they are to accept the planner role.

The application of controls to the various independent variables shows that they have substantial independent effects on both the intensity and quality of participation among teachers.

Eliminating path coefficients with effects lower than .10, the following causal structure emerges in the case of intensity of participation among teachers.

Figure 4A - Causal Model for Intensity of Participation - Teachers



According to the coefficients in the model, previous educational participation has an independent negative effect on the intensity of participation among teachers (beta = -.180) and also a negative effect on role acceptance (beta = -.196). Two rival explanations may account for these results: (1) previous educational participation may have shown teachers that school authorities tend to ignore policy proposals presented by bodies without a formally defined decision-making authority; or (2) teachers will tend to participate in educational issues beyond their immediate classroom precisely when they perceive traditional school decision-makers as not responsive to their efforts. Our data (presented in Table 9) showed that teachers were the group of participants with the lowest levels of feeling of efficacy over administrations (2.45) and the group less certain that the school district was equally responsive to all segments of the community (3.0). At the same time, teachers were the group of participants who considered that teachers should have the most important role in the decision-making process of the school district (4.42).

Among teachers, role acceptance and perceived responsiveness show effects contrary to those hypothesized. Both variables show negative effects upon the intensity of participation. These findings indicate that among teachers intensive participation in the planning task does not rest upon the feeling that significant others will be responsive to their planning efforts nor on their acceptance of the planner role. A plausible explanation is that teachers see participation in a high-accessibility, policy-level form of participation as a vehicle to make a policy demand, to bring some pressure into the system. If their intent for participation is political, perceived responsiveness will have neglible effects on the intensity or quality of participation.

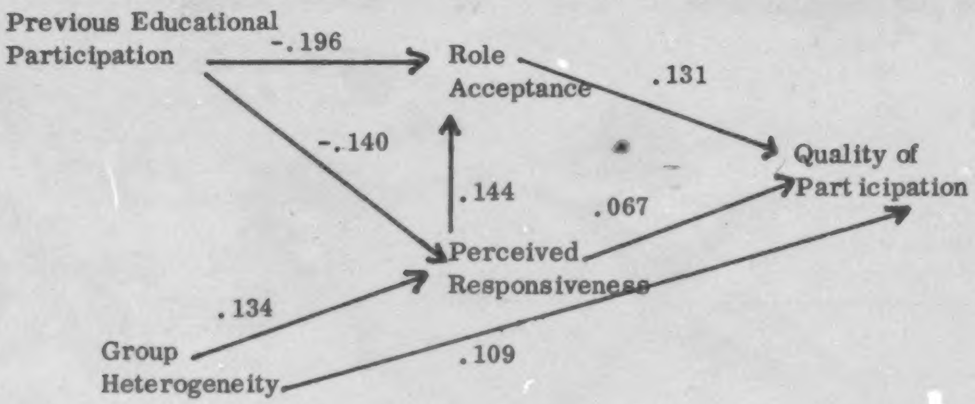
The effects of perceived responsiveness on the intensity and quality of participation are in fact very small (-.064 and .067).

These findings are also in agreement with the teachers' most frequently cited reason for participating in the planning task. As it will be recalled, 25 per cent of the teachers stated that their main reason for joining the planning task had been their desire to have a voice in the decisions affecting the school district.

The application of the model to the intensity of participation among teachers explains a moderate amount of its variance, or 15 per cent.

The application of the same model to the quality of participation among teachers accounts for a very small amount of the variance, or about 4 per cent. Nevertheless, role acceptance appears to have positive effects, as hypothesized (beta = .131). In addition, group heterogeneity has positive direct and indirect effects on the quality of participation (betas .109 and .134, respectively).

4B - Causal Model for Quality of Participation - Teachers


Previous Educational Participation
-.196
Role Acceptance
.131
-.140
.144
Quality of Participation
.067
Perceived Responsiveness
.134
Group Heterogeneity
.109

3. The Case of Administrators/Nonteaching Staff (N= 16)

Among administrators/nonteaching staff participants in the planning task we found several strong correlations between the selected independent variables and participation. In some cases, these associations are negative.

Table 27

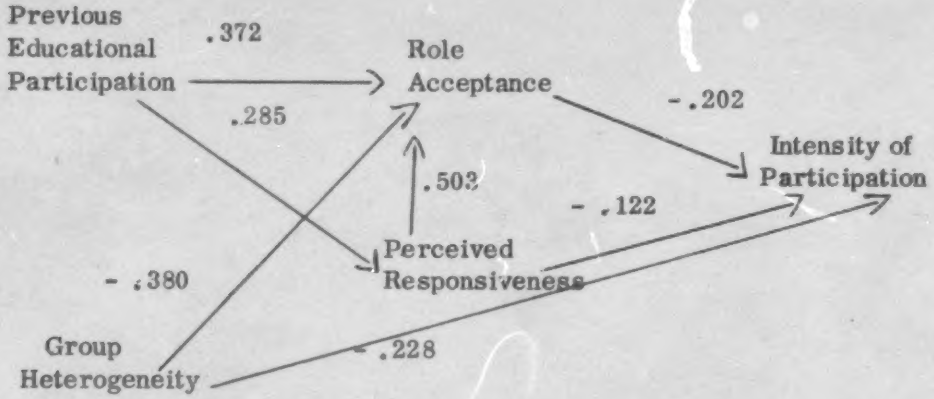
Correlations Between Intervening and Dependent Variables - Administrators/ Nonteaching Staff

	Perceived Responsiveness	Role Acceptance	Intensity of Participation	Quality of Participation
Previous Educ. Participation	.286	.506	-.166	-.318
Group Heterogeneity	0	-.370	-.153	.074
Perceived Responsiveness	1.0	.610	-.246	.188
Role Acceptance	.610	1.0	-.193	-.071

In the case of administrators/nonteaching staff, previous educational participation is strongly and positively correlated with perceived responsiveness (.286) and role acceptance (.506). However, except for the association between perceived responsiveness and quality of participation (.188), all relationships between the various independent variables and intensity or quality of participation are negative.

Applying statistical controls in order to assess the single effect of the various independent variables produces some changes in the coefficients; still, six of the nine hypothesized effects are not supported by the data.

Figure 5A - Causal Model of Intensity of Participation - Administrators/Non-Teaching Staff



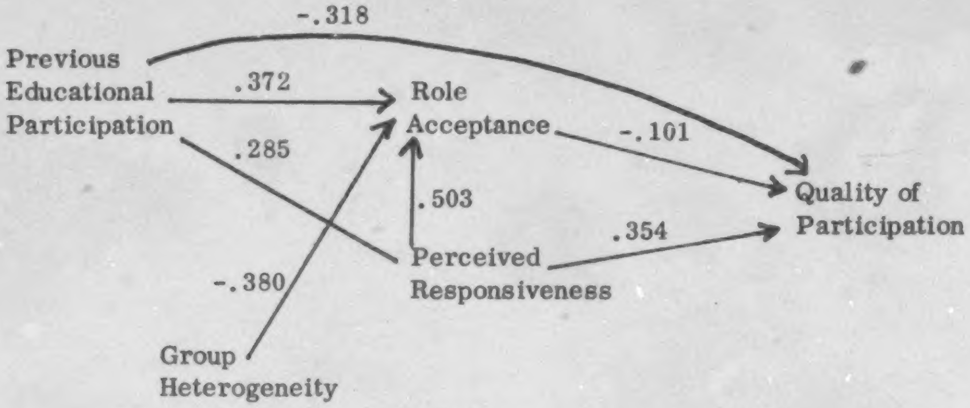
Among administrators/nonteaching staff, previous educational participation has strong effects on role acceptance (.372) and perceived responsiveness (2.58). These effects are in accord with our hypotheses. Nonetheless, group heterogeneity demonstrates strong and negative effects. It has a very substantial impact on role acceptance (- .308); according to this, the more heterogeneous the planning team, the less administrators/nonteaching staff participants will tend to accept the planner role. Group heterogeneity also has a strong and negative impact on the intensity of participation (- .228); in other words, the more heterogeneous the planning team, the less time administrators/nonteaching staff will devote to the planning task.

This model also shows that in this case, role acceptance and perceived responsiveness have negative effects upon the intensity of participation (- .202 and - .122, respectively). Two plausible reasons that might account for the negative effects of group heterogeneity in the case of administrators/nonteaching staff participants might be that: (1) group heterogeneity must prove to be somewhat threatening to them because the incursion of parents and students into policy-level issues possibly challenges the institutional role of the administrators/nonteaching staff group. (It must be noted that in this group were included several mid-level administrators, such as program directors and coordinators, and principals.)

(2) if administrators/nonteaching staff members are participating in the planning task because of a gate-keeping role (i.e., the need to know what other people might be talking about or doing in areas or programs that affect administrators, or the need to make sure that no changes are proposed without their knowledge or approval), then group heterogeneity does not play a part in providing encouragement for greater or better participation.

Altogether, this model explains a modest amount of the variance in the intensity of participation among administrators/nonteaching staff, or about 10 per cent. Further, it does not help understand what factors operate to increase the intensity of participation among administrators/nonteaching staff; we know only that the selected concurrent variables tend to depress it.

Figure 5B - Causal Model of Quality of Participation - Administrators/Nonteaching Staff



The application of the causal structure to the quality of participation among administrators/nonteaching staff explains a greater amount of variance, i.e., 19 per cent. In this case, perceived responsiveness of significant others appears to have strong, positive effects upon the quality of participation (.354). Previous educational participation has a direct, strong and negative effect upon the quality of participation (-.318), while role acceptance has a negative but weak influence (-.101).

The contradictory behavior of perceived responsiveness in affecting the intensity of participation negatively (-.122) but having strong positive effects upon the quality of participation (.354) is somewhat less puzzling when we recall that among administrators/nonteaching staff participants there was no significant correlation between the intensity and quality of their participation (r =-.06).

4. The Case of Students (N = 18)

The association between the independent variables and participation in the case of students shows a pattern somewhat similar to that of parents. In both cases, perceived responsiveness of significant others and role acceptance are positively related to previous educational participation (.155 and .239, respectively); perceived responsiveness has a strong influence over role acceptance (.496) and a moderate effect on the quality of participation (.170); and group heterogeneity has strong effects on the quality and intensity of participation (.219 and .309, respectively).

The greatest contrast between parents and students occurs in the effect of previous educational participation upon the intensity of participation. In the case of students, it has strong and negative effects on the intensity of participation (-.387). The effects between previous educational participation and other variables, however, should be accepted with caution since the scale used to measure educational participation among students was not (and could not be) identical to the scale employed to measure adult educational participation.

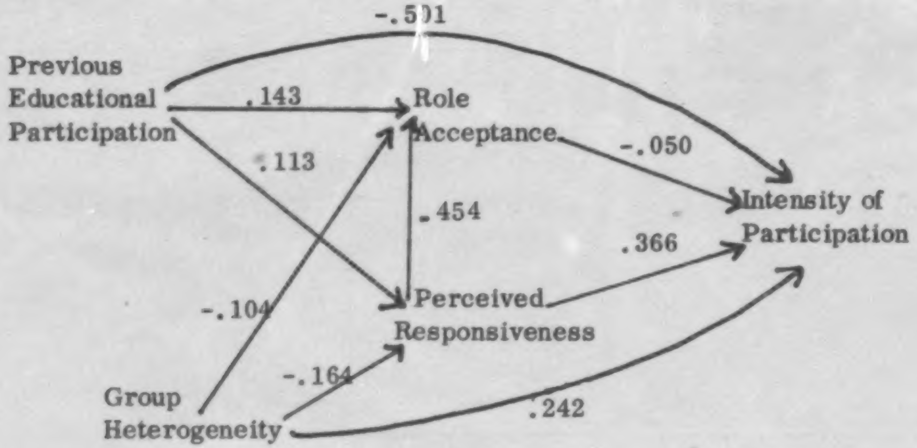
Table 28

Correlations Between Intervening and Dependent Variables - Students

	Perceived Responsiveness	Role Acceptance	Intensity of Participation	Quality of Participation
Previous Educ. Participation	.155	.239	- .518	.170
Group Heterogeneity	- .192	- .227	.309	.219
Perceived Responsiveness	1.0	.496	.217	.131
Role Acceptance	.496	1.0	- .043	.043

In applying statistical controls, a fully recursive causal model appears to apply in the case of students.

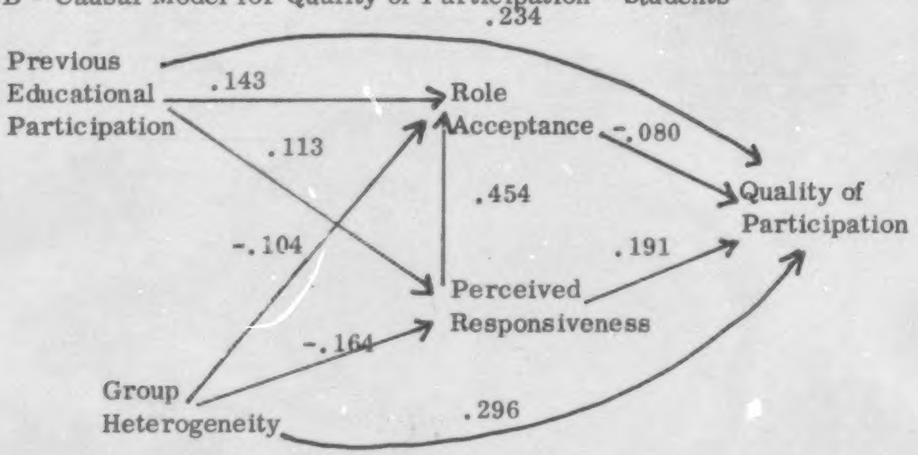
Figure 6A - Causal Model for Intensity of Participation - Students


-.501
Previous Educational Participation
.143
Role Acceptance
.113
-.050
Intensity of Participation
.454
.366
-.104
Perceived Responsiveness
-.164
Group Heterogeneity
.242

According to these path coefficients, group heterogeneity affects strongly and positively the intensity of participation among students (beta = .242), yet it has at the same time moderate and negative effects upon role acceptance and perceived responsiveness of significant others (betas = -.104 and -.164, respectively). These effects are surprising.

The model accounts for 21 per cent of the variance in the intensity of participation, the same amount as it was the case for parents. According to these findings, the intensity of participation among students is helped by group heterogeneity (beta = .242) and strongly so by perceived responsiveness (beta = .366). According to these findings however, previous educational participation hinders the intensity of participation (beta =-.501); but, we are reminded that the scale used to measure educational participation among students was not strictly comparable to that used for adults.

Figure 6B - Causal Model for Quality of Participation - Students


.234
Previous Educational Participation
.143
Role Acceptance
-.080
.113
Quality of Participation
.454
-.104
.191
Perceived Responsiveness
-.164
Group Heterogeneity
.296

The model explains a moderate amount of the variance in the quality of participation, or about 13 percent. Here we see that most independent variables have a positive effect on the quality of participation. Previous educational participation and group heterogeneity have strong effects (.234 and .296, respectively), while perceived responsiveness of significant others has a moderate effect (.191). The effect of role acceptance upon the quality of participation is insignificant.

C. The Effect of Situations of Role Congruency and Role Conflict on Participation

We had hypothesized that participants facing a situation of role congruency (one in which they both accepted the planner role and perceived significant others as responsive) would show greater levels of intensity and quality of participation than individuals facing a situation of role conflict (defined as a situation in which the individuals accepted the planner role but perceived significant others as not being favorable to their actions).

We will test this hypothesis by means of a t-test. Specifically, we will test the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the two role situations against the alternative hypothesis that role congruency should result in greater levels of participation (in terms of both intensity and quality).

Table 29

Levels of Intensity of Participation by Role Congruency and Role Conflict by Group (in Means)

Group	Role Congruency	Role Conflict	t Value	
Parents	4.81 (3.95)	3.78 (2.95)	.72	n.s. *
Teachers	3.37 (1.61)	4.00 (2.65)	-.90	n.s.
Administrators/nonteaching staff	2.33 (1.32)	2.75 (1.50)	-.51	n.s.
Students	4.30 (2.67)	3.75 (3.50)	.32	n.s.

* Indicates a t-value not significant at the .10 level, one-tailed test

Table 29 shows that although in two cases (parents and students), the mean of intensity of participation is lower under a situation of role conflict, the difference is not statistically significant. In the case of teachers and administrators/nonteaching staff, their mean for participation in terms of time is higher under a situation of role conflict, but these differences were not statistically significant either.

Table 30

Levels of Quality of Participation by Role Congruency and Role Conflict by Group (in Means)

Group	Role Congruency	Role Conflict	t-Value
Parents	3.25 (.51)	2.74 (.62)	2.55 *
Teachers	3.19 (.69)	3.33 (.69)	-.52
Administrators/Nonteaching Staff	3.37 (.50)	2.50 (.41)	3.00 *
Students	2.76 (.46)	2.73 (.46)	.111

* Indicates a t-value significant at the .01 level, one-tailed test.

Altogether, this variable role congruency/role conflict was demonstrated to have practically no effect on either the intensity or quality of participation. It is to be noted that this variable showed the least expected results of all the concurrent variables examined in the study. We discuss the possible reasons for this in the following section.

Summary

The effects of the various independent variables on the intensity and quality of participation among the participants in planning show certain commonalities and differences.

For all participants, with the exception of teachers, previous educational participation leads to a perception that significant others will be responsive to their planning efforts. The more individuals have been involved in educational activities, the more they come to believe that persons in decision-making positions will respond favorably to their efforts.

In all four groups of participants, feelings of perceived responsiveness of significant others have moderate to strong effects upon the acceptance of the planner role. This effect is strongest among clients of the school system, i.e., parents (.597) and students (.454). It is weakest among teachers (.144). This finding is consistent with the interpretation that among teachers, perceived responsiveness might not be a factor promoting voluntary participation at the policy level.

In all cases, with the exception of administrators/nonteaching staff participants, group heterogeneity increases the intensity and quality of participation. The strong and consistent effects of group heterogeneity may be in no small part due to the fact that the most commonly mentioned reward from participation is interaction with other participants: talking to people, learning from discussions with them, and exchanging views about education with them (see Table 31 below).

The main differences among the four groups of participants emerge in the effects of role acceptance and perceived responsiveness upon levels of participation. Role acceptance affects the intensity of participation of parents only; it has negative effects in the case of teachers and administrators/nonteaching staff, and negligible effects in the case of students. However, role acceptance affects positively the quality of participation among parents and teachers. It has negligible effects among students and administrators/nonteaching staff.

Perceived responsiveness behaves as a crucial variable in affecting intensity of participation only among students. It does not behave in the hypothesized direction in the case of adult participants. While not affecting the intensity of participation, perceived responsiveness does have a significant effect on the quality of participation of three groups: its effect is strong in the case of administrators/nonteaching staff, and moderate in the cases of parents and students.

Another significant difference among participants occurs in the effects of previous educational participation on the intensity and quality of participation. It was hypothesized that the effects of previous educational participation would be in all cases mostly indirect, via higher levels of role acceptance and perceived responsiveness. The data show direct and negative effects on the intensity of participation of teachers and students, and direct and negative effects on the quality of participation of administrators/nonteaching staff.

The concurrent variables examined in this study have been shown to be of utility in accounting for some of the variance in levels of participation in the planning task. Altogether, these variables explained a greater portion of the variance in intensity than in quality of participation.

The model utilized to assess the direct and indirect effects of the antecedent and concurrent variables showed differential effects among the four groups of participants in planning. The variables in the model showed greater and similar effects in the case of parents and students; they accounted for approximately 21 percent of the variance in the intensity and 10 percent of the variance in the quality of their participation. These variables did less well in explaining the variance in the participation of teachers and administrators/nonteaching staff. In the case of the latter two groups, our data show some effects in the opposite direction to that hypothesized. This can be taken as an indication that our model fails to capture some of the factors that contribute to increases in the levels of intensity and quality of participation of these two groups.

The differential effect that the model showed for the various sets of participants is not surprising in the light of the different positions these individuals occupy in the structure and functioning of the school system. In participatory planning, the participants were supposed to behave as peers within the planning teams. Their social interaction at planning team meetings showed no major status differences (though students tended to interact less than other members); however, our data show that the participants were affected differentially by the various antecedent and concurrent variables under examination.

Our causal model was simplistic in that it presumed similar effects for different sets of participants. The findings reported in this study indicate that a more complex set of motivations is at work. Our analysis gives evidence that some organizational variables - presumed to be of great importance given the fact that they are amenable to manipulation by school authorities - have indeed substantial effects on the intensity and quality of participation that obtain. To the degree that these effects are significant, various useful policy implications can be derived from them.

On the other hand, the relatively large unexplained variance of the model suggests that other variables - some of them perhaps beyond the school's control - play a significant part in determining greater levels in the intensity and quality of participation in the planning task.

NOTES

1. All reported correlation coefficients are Pearson correlations.

2. There is no set rule by which to judge the strength of path coefficients. Verba, Nie and Kim (The Modes of Democratic Participation: A Cross-National Comparison, 1971), in their studies of participation, adopted coefficients (betas) greater than .20 as indicative of a strong effect; coefficients between .15 and .20 were considered moderate; and coefficients between .10 and .14 as having a weak, though still significant, effect. Their procedure is followed herein.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A. The Nature of Educational Participation: Action vs. Policy Level

The case of participatory planning examined in this study showed that not a large number of individuals, either in the school system (teachers, students, mid-rank administrators, and nonteaching staff), or outside it (parents and citizens without children in schools) are attracted into educational participation at the policy level, even when access into it is open. At the same time, enough people are attracted as volunteer planners to make participatory planning feasible. (In this instance, more volunteers could not easily have been accommodated, since working with 11 planning groups was very time-consuming work for a staff of two persons.)

The policy-level participation under study did not deal with immediate issues or problems, but had a long- and medium-range time framework. The "future-oriented" nature of the task undoubtedly discouraged the involvement of some potential participants. Various nonparticipants commented that they considered the planning activity "too far removed from the district's problems", or "too futuristic".

It is not certain that the number of participants would have increased dramatically if the participatory activity had a more immediate focus. Events within the school district shortly before completion of this study produced evidence in this respect. A suggestion by the district's superintendent to form a "representative assembly" of individuals to deal with the pressing issue of closure and reorganization of schools did not appeal to very many people.

Considerable evidence exists that the percentages of persons interested in educational policy issues is small. The percentages of voters in school district elections is one example. Activities initiated by the planning teams also gave evidence that the community's interest in educational participation at the policy level is limited. In their work of assessing the needs and desires of the community and students regarding the number of educational issues and alternatives, participants in the planning task used surveys. The six surveys carried out by project participants utilized random samples of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. In no case did the over-all response rate reach over 75 percent. Relatively simple and rather broad questionnaires resulted in response rates between 62 and 72 percent. A more elaborate questionnaire asking the respondents to determine certain educational priorities produced a 34 percent return rate, and a more difficult and time-consuming budget priority questionnaire resulted in a response of 14 percent of those sampled. Also, individuals who received two or more questionnaires expressed the feeling that they were "tired of questionnaires" and that the community was being "surveyed to death".

On the other hand, through the utilization of surveys, the opinions of about 2000 community residents were obtained. The data have a reasonable level of statistical reliability, so that the views of the entire community are known with some confidence on numerous issues.[1]

The total number of persons who get involved in school affairs in the community is very high, but, as Table 31 shows, it is not high at the policy level. Participation in auxiliary activities at the school level is commonplace; as shown in Table 20, these supportive activities attracted 74 percent of the individuals who were involved on a voluntary basis in the district's educational affairs. The numbers of people involved are substantial.

The appeal of action-level activities may be in small part due to the fact that these activities give the volunteer an opportunity to be in contact with students, possibly their own children. Also, these activities do not require much "preparation" time and usually involve a short-time commitment.

Table 31

Volunteer Participation in the PAUSD, 1973-74[2]

	Number of Volunteers	Hrs./Year per activity	Hrs./Year per participant
Auxiliary activities, classroom level (teacher aides, lecturers, tutors)	668	5,628	8.5
Auxiliary activities, school level (playground and lunch helpers, drivers, fund raisers, babysitting, library staffing, shopping)	3,087	79,254	25.7
PTA leadership activities	41	9,300	226.8
District advisory committees	51	3,565	69.9
Participatory planning[3]	328	15,100	46.0
	4,175	112,847	

A plausible rival hypothesis for the much greater amount of participation at the action level is that school administrators encourage this level of activity but provide for limited channels at the policy level. For instance, administrators can set a maximum to the number of participants in advisory committees. However, the interest in participating in these committees does not seem intense. In addition, these advisory committees came into existence mostly at the initiative of administrators.

B. The Influence of Organizational Affiliation and Levels of Education

The evidence produced by this field trial in participatory planning reveals that even when participation is chosen by the individual alone, without benefit of appointment by school authorities, those who will choose to participate will be a relatively small group. It appears that policy-level participation appeals to persons with a stable interest in educational issues and usually with a known reputation for activism and leadership in school affairs. Informal interviews with several parents, students, administrators, and teachers in the district not involved in the planning task showed that many of the parents had a reputation for having been "very active" in their children's schools and to have supported educational innovations in the past. Approximately two-thirds of the teachers were described as being "very good" or "good" teachers, interested in curricular and program innovations, and having been "active in school and district committee work". Likewise, the majority of the administrators/nonteaching staff participants were described as active and creative leaders. Half of the students had been active in student government and many of them were involved in extracurricular activities in their schools and in the community.

In the effort to develop greater interest in and prestige for the planning activity, project staff involved community edudational leaders in it. Early in 1972, when the project started, a list of 380 "educational influentials" in the community was prepared. By mid-1975, 88 of these individuals had participated in the project. These people served on task forces early in the project, and for the most part, not on the participatory planning teams. While it is hard to draw the line between people who were "prodded" into participation and those who came of their own volition, there is a nucleus of educational participants who will become active in either low- or high-accessibility channels for participation.

In the examination of the antecedent variables of participation, we saw that participants in the planning task were characterized by affiliation in social and civic activities. Although we have no data on the number of Palo Alto residents who belong to voluntary organizations, it seems highly unlikely that the average affiliation rate is as high as that evinced by participants in the project (about 1.73 organizations). A comparison which we made between participants and non-participants showed that all participants - whether in high- or low-accessibility forms of participation - have greater rates of educational involvement than the community at large ($p < .005$).

We have also seen that high levels of education characterize the participants. In this society, levels of education seem to play a role in the individual's self-selection for educational involvement. An interesting result is that persons with relatively higher levels of education vis-à-vis others in their community will choose themselves for participation. Data from the Florida law-mandated advisory committees show that the mean years of education of participants in these committees was 16 years, whereas the mean of education for the state was 12.1 years; in the community-controlled school movement, most of those who participated in the school committees were individuals with 14-16 years of education, while the mean education for their community was probably 10-12 years. In the Palo Alto case, the mean for the adult participants in the planning activity was 18, whereas the mean years of education for the community was 16. This suggests that it is not years of education alone that makes individuals feel they qualify, but their level of education vis-à-vis their neighbors in the community in which they live.

The Status of Educational Participation

An important finding from our study is that while many individuals with a reputation for educational activism joined the planning teams, practically none of the parents and citizens presently active in the low-accessibility forms of participation (namely, members in PTA leadership positions and in advisory committees) did. Of the 75-member PTA leadership in the district, only three PTA leaders joined the participatory planning activity. Of the approximately 80 members in the various district-level advisory committees, five persons joined the planning activity. One reason might be that these individuals felt they were already giving substantial amounts of their time to educational activities. A rival hypothesis however, is that low-accessibility forms of participation enjoy greater status than high-accessibility forms of participation. For PTA leaders and advisory committee members, therefore, participation in the planning task might have been perceived as a "lower" form of involvement. A third hypothesis is that participation in planning has a challenging appeal to a very different group of people than those who find satisfaction in the PTA or in advisory committees. One of the benefits of participatory planning is to tap this pool of human resources for educational planning.

The case among teachers parallels that of citizens. Few of the teachers who joined the planning task were department heads in their schools. On the other hand, there was an almost even split between secondary and elementary teachers, and among the secondary school teachers, most of them were teachers of academic (as opposed to elective) courses.

C. Educational Participation as a Social Interaction Process

The analysis of concurrent variables carried out in Chapter IV revealed that the participants' levels of intensity and quality of participation in the planning task were adequate by the criteria set up. Participants gave, on a completely voluntary basis, substantial amounts of time and effort to the planning task and behaved as educational planners.

The causal model we examined in an attempt to learn what concurrent (organizational) factors impinge on variations in the individual's participation in the planning task accounted for a greater variance in intensity than in quality of participation. The model accounted for as high as 42 percent and as low as 10 percent in the variance of intensity of participation; it explained as much as 19 percent and as low as 4 percent in the variance of quality of participation. The structural model also revealed that previous levels of educational participation possess a carry-over effect that affects levels of participation in the planning task, not only indirectly - by increasing the individual's acceptance of the planner role and his feeling that school authorities will respond positively to his planning proposals - but also directly.

A surprising finding in the study was the very strong effect on both quality and intensity of participation produced by the heterogeneity of the planning teams. One interpretation that may account for the substantial and most positive effect of group heterogeneity is that, for many participants, the process of social interaction is quite important. When the respondents were asked to state the major sources of satisfaction or "greatest rewards" from serving in the planning task, over half of the participants referred to their interpersonal relations with other team members: exchanging views with other participants, learning about education in discussions with them, and working with other equally qualified individuals as a team. Table 31 shows the over-all pattern of responses.

The rewards cited by the respondents are in agreement with their reasons for joining the planning task (see p. 33, Table 7). Answers to both questions indicate that the nature of the task - policy-level participation and a concern with planning activities - was not as important as the opportunity to deal with educational topics in a non-threatening and intellectual setting.

Table 32 indicates that 59 percent of the best-liked features referred to the friendly setting in which other persons with a high interest in and knowledge of educational issues could interact. Additionally, 23 percent of the best-liked features referred to the learning experience that the planning activity afforded. In contrast, only 15 percent of the replies mentioned that accomplishing planning goals - the raison d'être of the planning activity - was the greatest source of reward from their participation.

Table 32

Best-Liked Features of Participating in the Planning Task

Best-Liked Features	Parents	Teachers	Adm./Nontch. Staff	Students	Total
People-related:					
Learning from discussions with others, exchanging viewpoints -	22%	32%	26%	7%	22%
Interaction between community and staff people -	24%	27%	37%	14%	24%
Doing work with the others	11%	17%	5%	17%	13%
Learning process-related:					
Learning about education -	31%	3%	26%	21%	22%
Learning about the functioning of small groups -				7%	1%
Planning task-related:					
Accomplishing planning objectives -	6%	17%		28%	15%
General sense of civic duty		2%	5%	7%	3%
	N=54	N=41	N=19	N=29	N=143 *

* The number of responses in each category is greater than the number of subjects in the study because in some cases respondents stated more than one best-liked feature.

If participants did not state that making proposals or accomplishing planning objectives were major sources of satisfaction, an alternative explanation might be that respondents did not cite these reasons simply because they did not apply. If such was indeed the case and if making proposals or accomplishing planning objectives was salient in the mind of the respondents, participants should have mentioned the lack of achieving planning objectives or their failure to come up with proposals among the greatest sources of their dissatisfaction. It is to this issue that we now turn. Table 33 shows the participants' answer to the question asking their greatest "source of dissatisfaction" or the aspects of their participation they liked least.[4]

Table 33

Least-Liked Features of Participating in the Planning Task

Least-Liked Features	Parents	Teachers	Adm/Nontch. Staff	Students	Total
Planning Task related:	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Not accomplishing planning goal	9%	5%	15%	7%	8%
Unclarity of task	6	10		29	9
Failure of other members to work as a team; ineffectual members	27	28	15	21	10
Slow pace of the participatory process	16	5	10	7	10
Feeling of futility; proposals will come to nothing	6	10		7	7
Time related:					
Short deadlines	6	5	5	14	7
Inconvenient meeting times	9	8	10		8
Lack of continuity due to biweekly meetings			5		1
Demands participating makes on personal time	9	20	20	14	15
Limited cooperation from district personnel	2				1
Not having enough community members in team	4	5			3
Conflict between working for PAUSD and working in planning task		3			1
	N = 45	N = 40	N = 20	N = 14	N = 119*

* The number of responses in each category is slightly different from the number of subjects in the study because, in some cases, respondents stated more than one "least-liked" feature and in other cases their response was not codeable.

About 44 per cent of the respondents referred to a planning task-related source of difficulty. The failure to accomplish planning task goals was mentioned only by 8 per cent of the respondents (mostly administrators/nonteaching staff). But four other reasons also related to the planning task were mentioned: 9 per cent of the respondents complained about the unclarity of the task (as Table 32 indicates, a large proportion of these were students), 10 per cent disliked the slow process in the designing of proposals, 10 per cent complained about the failure by team members to contribute to the planning task (not doing their homework, missing several meetings, defending too strongly a personal viewpoint), and 7 per cent stated to have feelings that the planning proposals would result in no changes in the school district.

These data suggest that planning considerations were salient in the minds of the majority of participants. Yet this evidence does not refute the contention that the process of social interaction is a very important aspect of their participation.

In an attempt to probe further whether the participants saw their participation as an end in itself (i.e., the pleasure of the social interaction) or as a means to educational outcomes (i.e., the achievement of planning objectives), we asked the participants: "What do you think would be the effects on the PAUSD if Project Redesign ceased to exist?" In asking this projective question, we intended to probe the way in which each participant perceived his/her involvement. Table 34 presents the pattern of responses.

Table 34

Effect Perceived by Planning Task Participants if Project Stopped

Perceived Effects	Parents %	Teachers %	Adm./Nontch. Staff %	Students %	Total
District would be making decisions by reacting to crises; no foresight would be involved.	43	33	31	37	38
There would be greater disorganization in the District.	3	6	13	11	6
Decrease in citizen and student input and communication.	18	22	--	16	17
Absence of new ideas and perspectives.	13	11	--	16	11
Great loss - unspecified reason	3	6	6	--	4
Little impact. Project has brought no change.	18	19	25	21	20
Hard to assess. Don't know.	3	3	25	--	5
	N=39	N=36	N=16	N=19	N=110 *

* The number of responses in each category is slightly different from the number of subjects in the study due to either multiple responses or uncodeable answers.

According to these data, approximately 42% of the respondents did see the planning activity as making a difference in the policy-making process of the school district (either through its bringing data-based, rational proposals or by preventing a more confused process of decision-making). Many respondents stated the view that, without the planning activity, the district would resort to the "old way of making decisions", which they perceived as a muddling-through process. Twenty-eight percent of the participants saw the planning task not necessarily as a way to make changes in the decision-making process, but as a means of increasing communication between the community and its schools and of bringing in fresh and innovative ideas.

Surprisingly, 21 percent of the respondents expressed the opinion that the project had not made and would not make a difference in the district. It is hard to explain why these participants continued in the planning task if they felt their products would not result in changes, unless one accepts as a possible reason for participation the importance to them of the social interaction process. Responses to the question presented in Table 34 suggested that, for many participants, involvement in the planning teams had an intrinsic value in affording a rewarding intellectual climate, where participants could discuss educational issues with persons having "first-hand knowledge" of education, and "sound opinions".

The causal model analyzed in Chapter IV of this study focused on organizational variables, such as role acceptance, perceived responsiveness of significant others, and group heterogeneity, because these variables are manipulable by school authorities. The results showed that structural or organizational variables are, in fact, relevant, and play a part in affecting levels of educational participation in the planning activity. Our data also furnish evidence that many other motivations, some of them perhaps bearing little upon the function of the planning task, are also at work.

D. Policy Implications for School Authorities

Several policy implications for future efforts by school administrators to promote citizen and school personnel participation can be made. We must, however, preface our recommendations by emphasizing that most of our findings derived from a middle- and upper-middle-class school district that was well-known for its progressive programs and highly-achieving students. In addition, the stability of our findings awaits further replication.

The study showed that opening the doors to participation at the policy level does not result in a flood of participants. Interest in education is a specialized concern, with strong appeal among people who have demonstrated a previous interest in educational issues. Fears on the part of school administrators that highly-accessible policy-level forms of participation will be chaotic, in the sense of bringing in many voices, are probably unfounded.

On the other hand, the evidence from the project is that sufficient persons can be recruited from the public at large and from the staff to provide a workable input. In our case, the number of persons attracted made participatory planning a feasible approach to planning. The participants' levels of intensity and quality of participation in the planning task were adequate by the criteria we set up. Participants gave, on a completely voluntary basis, substantial amounts of time and effort to the planning task and behaved as educational planners. It would seem, then, that the creation of a highly accessible form of participation will produce benefits for the school district, since participants will perform their task seriously.

Moreover, while participation in a policy-level form of participation attracts people whose interest in education has already been manifested, a high-accessibility form of participation will result in the incorporation of a group of individuals who have been absent from the educational arena. This group, small in size, includes essentially a number of older professionals who probably did not perceive the PTA as an appropriate channel, or who had not been close enough to the school district to become appointed to its various advisory committees.

It is quite likely that participants in high-accessibility, policy-level forms of participation will not be representative of their community with regard to educational levels or occupation. On the other hand, the school district will benefit from the free contribution made by a highly-qualified and competent group of persons. High-accessibility forms of participation offer the school district access to a pool of previously under-utilized resource persons.

A "highly accessible" form of participation may not mean that a great proportion of participants will come, but it may result in an increase in the number of those with access to policy issues. Though the number of active participants in a participatory activity may be small, still a large number of people can be reached indirectly. For instance, participatory planning can substantially increase the number of participants in the decision-making process of the school district by means of conducting surveys. The considerable non-response rate to questionnaires in our study, on the other hand, suggests that surveys should not be utilized as the only means of involving others. Different means worth trying - particularly in low-income areas - might be group interviews, where individuals are personally asked to come and their opinions obtained through a process of dialogue.

A process of participatory planning will not be disruptive to the school district, since many of the participants will be individuals who are basically satisfied with the school district's performance, even though they see room for improvement in many areas. A negative implication of this satisfaction is that participants may not raise critical issues or question important aspects of the educational system. The parent with the "problem child" is unfortunately not the active participant; the student who cannot cope with schooling is not available for extracurricular involvement.

Since "being asked to participate" appears to be a strong reason for participation among students and parents, attempts to increase the number of participants should consider personal and oral appeals to students and parents in clerical jobs and blue-collar occupations, or parents who have been removed from school functions. This appeal would not have to be construed as appointment; what is being suggested is a very active recruitment effort.

Many factors play a part in the individual's decision to participate. Some of these may be beyond the control of school administrators or authorities. On the other hand, one of the most effective structural variables appears to be the high degree of heterogeneity (i.e., the presence of teachers, parents, students, and administrators) in any given group of educational participants. Our findings give evidence that group heterogeneity results in a noticeable increase in both the intensity and quality of participation. A policy implication of this is that efforts at increasing participation should consider the involvement not only of parents, but also of teachers, students, and nonteaching staff. It must be underscored, however, that we found that the heterogeneity of the various groups of participants is, to a high degree, a function of the topic the groups deal with. A related policy implication is that policy issues to be dealt with by volunteer participants should be so defined as to be appealing to a cross-section of participants. This means that some policy issues will not lend themselves to participatory planning or to similar forms of participation.

Among parents, the acceptance of the planner role has moderate effects on the quality and strong effects on the intensity of their participation; among teachers, it moderately affects the quality of their participation. A consequence of this is that attempts at participatory planning should define as clearly as possible the planner role and should reiterate it among the participants.

Among parents and students, the feeling that their planning efforts will be accepted has moderate effects on the quality of their participation. A consequence of this is that attempts at participatory planning should convey to the participants who are clients of the school system messages by school authorities that their inputs will be heard and utilized in policy decisions.

Finally, the study showed a significant association between being involved at the policy level and having participated previously in auxiliary activities in the schools. This suggests that educational participation moves from lower to higher levels of abstraction and, furthermore, that it can be developed. If school administrators are interested in reaching citizens with lower levels of education and in clerical and blue-collar occupations, special efforts will have to be made to recruit them. A strategy for action by school administrators might be to start the development of citizens' interest in educational issues and activities by bringing them first into the schools as classroom or school volunteers.

NOTES

1. The standard errors on survey questions are reasonably small, and we have repeated samples from parents with very similar results for both samples.

2. Annual Report on Volunteers. Extended Resources Center, PAUSD, June 10, 1974, pp. 1-2. Similar trends were observed in the academic years 1974-1975 and 1975-1976.

3. This refers to participation in Project Redesign, the planning experiment on which this study focuses. The 1973-1974 figures for Project Redesign participation reflect the early stage of the project. In consequence, they underestimate the number of hours given by planning team members, for the planning teams began operating in January of 1974. The figures, on the other hand, exaggerate the number of participants, because they include about 250 volunteers who helped in administering and coding a needs assessment questionnaire given to a community sample of 800 persons.

4. Both wordings, "least-liked features", and "greatest sources of difficulty" in their participation were used in the open-ended question. Likewise, in the earlier question, respondents were asked to mention the "best-liked features" and the "greatest sources of reward" in their participation. The pattern of responses was similar using either wording.

CHAPTER VI .

METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

Data reported in tables and utilized in the regression analyses were obtained through the administration of a questionnaire containing both open-ended and structured questions. All stable participants - 126 individuals - were given the questionnaire. Completing it was voluntary and confidential, and 91 percent of the respondents, or 114 persons, complied.

In this study, we make use of inferential statistics only when comparing the individuals in our study with other groups of participants in the school district. In the internal comparison, that is, in the comparison among groups of participants within the planning task, we do not use statistical tools, since we assume that we are dealing with an entire population of "participants".

The notion of "concurrent" variables presupposes that the participants have been subjected to the planning setting for a period of time - time during which the "concurrent" variables may have exercised their effect. Consequently, the questionnaire was administered to participants who had been in the planning task for at least six months, a period judged sufficiently long for the concurrent factors to operate.

The questionnaire was pretested with nonparticipants, as well as with a number of participants who had to leave the project for reasons other than losing interest in it.

A number of antecedent variables were assessed in terms of a single indicator. All variables in the causal structure analyzed in Chapter IV were measured through the use of indices or scales. The items employed were as follows:

Antecedent Variables:

Feeling of Efficacy over Administrators (Score range, 1 - 3)

If you were concerned about an educational problem and contacted the school administration (i.e., the superintendent, assistant superintendent, principals), how do you think they would react? School administrators would:

Understand your problem and do what they could about it _______
Listen to you but try to avoid doing anything; they would try to pass the buck - _______
Ignore you or dismiss you as soon as they could - _______

Belief about the Citizen-Role in School Decisions (Score range, 1 - 3)

How do you feel about citizen participation in school decisions (that is to say, in designing and presenting recommendations dealing with instructional, as well as non-instructional issues) ?

In general, it results in wiser educational decisions ________

In general, it hampers the making of sound educational decisions by competent educators - ________

Sound educational decisions can be made with or without citizen participation ________

Belief about the Role of Administrators (Score range, 1 - 3)

In your opinion, how should school administrators behave? Check one.

They should do pretty much what the citizens want ________

They should use their own judgment of what they think is best - ________

They should compromise between their own judgment and what the community wants - ________

Belief about the Role of the Board of Education (Score range, 1 - 3)

How do you feel the Board of Education should behave in representing the people? Check one.

It should generally accept educational recommendations proposed by the superintendent and staff ________

The Board should generally be responsive to felt needs of the community - ________

The Board should compromise between the educational advice of administrators and the demands presented by citizens - ________

The items used to measure the beliefs about the role of administrators and that of the Board of Education were adapted from those used by Agger and Goldstein (1971), pp. 47-48.

Educational Role of the Board, Administrators, Parents, Teachers and Students in the Decision-Making Process (Score range 1 - 5)

Ideally, what should be the role of the Board, school administrators, parents, students, and teachers in the following policy areas? For each area, rate each group according to the importance you would assign to its role: 5 = most important role to 1 = least important. (Two groups or more may be assigned the same degree of importance in some cases.)

	The role of the Board	The role of Admin.	The role of Parents	The role of Teachers	The role of Students
5. On course offerings					
6. On methods of instruction					
7. On the introduction of new programs					
8. On textbook selection					
9. On performance evaluation of teachers and administrators					
10. On hiring and firing of teachers and administrators					
11. On reorganization of schools					
12. On setting of the budget					

Level of Satisfaction with School District Performance (score range 1 - 5)

Do you think that the Palo Alto Unified School District gives its citizens their money's worth?

Strongly agree____Agree____Disagree____Strongly Disagree____No Opinion____

Belief about Responsiveness of School District to all Community Segments (Score range 1 - 5)

Do you think that in general the Palo Alto schools meet the needs of all segments of the community?

Strongly agree____Agree____Disagree____Strongly Disagree____No Opinion____

Family Climate About Voluntary Participation (0 = no parental involvement in voluntary organizations, 1 = parental involvement in voluntary organizations)

Are (or were) your parents also involved in educational, civic, or cultural organizations? Which ones?

Feeling of Personal Control (Score range 0 - 3)*

Please circle the item in each pair of items that you find to be true more often.

a. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.
b. Trusting to fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.

a. What happens to me is my own doing.
b. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking

a. When I make plans, I am almost certain I can make them work
b. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.

* This scale is adapted from the Internal-External Control scale developed by J. Rotter (1966), pp. 11-12.

Sense of Disposable Time or Time Willing to Give to Civic or Social Participation (Number of hours per week)

Generally, how many evenings would you be able to commit to work outside your home in voluntary activities or associations that interest you?

1 eve. per week___ 2 eve. per week___ 3 eve. per week___ 4 or more eve. per week___
1 eve. per month___ 2 eve. per month ___ 3 eve. per month___ Other_____

Again, generally, how many daytime hours during a typical weekday would you be able to commit to work in voluntary activities or associations that interest you?

1 hr. per week___ 2 hrs. per week ___ 3 hrs. per week___ 4 or more hrs. per week____
1 hr. per day ___ 2 hrs. per day___ 3 hrs. per day ___ Other _____

Involvement in Auxiliary and Advisory Activities (Score range 0 - 9)

Have you ever participated in any of the following education-related activities in your community? Mark where appropriate.

	Very Often	Often	On few occasions only
School committees or school task forces			
Volunteering general services (tutoring, library staffing, providing transportation, etc.)			
Other:			

Leadership Experience (0 = no office held, 1 = has held or holds office in educational group)

Are you now a member of the following organizations?

PTA or PTSA Yes____ Years as Member____ No ____
PAEA or PAFT Yes____ Years as Member ____ No ____

If you are a member in any of the above organizations, have you ever held or do you presently hold any office in them?

Yes ___ Office________________________________ No ____

Concurrent Variables

Role Acceptance (Score range 0 - 4)

For each pair of items, choose the item with which you agree more (circle a or b)

30. a. Long-range planning is a useful and necessary tool to bring about educational change
b. We must solve today's educational problems and issues before we can solve those of tomorrow.

31. a. Project Redesign participants should represent to the best of their ability the educational needs and desires of the Palo Alto community.
b. Project Redesign participants should use their own judgement of what is good and what is appropriate for the community.

32. a. If the planning teams present validated educational proposals, these will be adopted.
b. Whether the planning teams' proposals will be accepted or not lies outside the power of Project Redesign.

33. a. Proposals to be originated in Project Redesign will be valuable because they will be the product of many hours of hard work.
b. Proposals to be originated in Project Redesign will be valuable because they will address the needs of the learners.

34. a. Proposals that will be presented by the various planning teams should be considered as general suggestions for educational change.
b. Proposals that will be presented by the various planning teams should be considered as specific recommendations for action that will receive careful attention.

This variable was considered to cover various dimensions of the planner role. It was, therefore, not treated as a scale - in which all items are supposed to be either consistent with one another or else to possess an ordered degree of difficulty (as is the case for Guttman scales) - but as an index. This index was adopted in view of its apparent content validity.

Perceived Responsiveness of Significant Others (Score range 6 - 30)

In general, do you expect a skeptical reaction to Project Redesign proposals on the part of the following groups? Circle your answer.

	Very unlikely				Very Likely
Board of Education	X	X	X	X	X
Superintendent	X	X	X	X	X
Central Office Administration	X	X	X	X	X

What impact do you expect Project Redesign proposals to have on the educational policies considered by these groups? Circle your answer.

	Very strong impact			Very weak impact	
Board of Education	X	X	X	X	X
Superintendent	X	X	X	X	X
Central Office Administration	X	X	X	X	X

Reliability coefficient $\alpha_k = .824$

Educational Participation (Score range 0 - 6)

In the past two years, which of the following have you done?

Voted in a Board election or school tax election ________

Spoken or written to a teacher or principal concerning school matters (excluding regular parent-teacher conferences) _______

Attended a PTA or parent meeting _______

Attended back-to-school night ______

Held office in the PTA or similar school organization _______

Spoken or written to the Board or Superintendent _______

Reliability coefficient $\alpha_k = .906$

Participation Intensity (Hours per week)

How many hours per week have you spent in Project Redesign activities? (Include both time in meetings and time devoted to preparation for the meetings such as assignments.)

On the average ______ hours per week.

Participation Quality (Score range 1 - 5)

How would you rate yourself on the following? (Try to be as objective as possible.)

35. I prepare for my planning team meetings by doing the assignments (reading articles, preparing reports, contacting some people, etc.)

Always ____ Very often ____ Often ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____

36. I volunteer for special assignments for the benefit of my planning team's work.
Always ____ Very often ____ Often ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____

37. I have discussed what Redesign is doing with other persons in the Palo Alto community (parents, teachers, students, administrators, citizens in general.)
Always ____ Very often ____ Often ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____

38. I try to keep in mind a long-range perspective in the ideas and proposals my planning team has studied.
Always ____ Very often ____ Often ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____

39. I try to keep informed of what other planning teams are doing.
Always ____ Very often ____ Often ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____

40. The opinions of other planning team members have helped my understanding of several educational issues and problems.
Always ____ Very often ____ Often ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____

41. My proposals have attempted to reflect community needs and wishes about educational change.
Always ____ Very Often ____ Often ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____

Reliability coefficient $\alpha_k = .684$

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